NEW MASSES

October 19, 1943 15¢ In Canada 20¢

THE SCHEDULE LAG

by Colonel T.

UNITY WITH COMMUNISTS?

A discussion by ALEXANDER MEIKLEJOHN and EARL BROWDER

BEHIND ANGLO-AMERICAN RELATIONS

by Joseph Starobin

EDUCATING THE COLLEGES

by William Kerman

EX LIBRIS

by Richard O. Boyer

Also in This Issue: "Austrian Battleground" by Hans Staudinger; "The Tax Program" by the Editors; "The Creator of Tristram Shandy" by T. A. Jackson.

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BETWEEN OURSELVES

WE HAVE always been a firm believer in the use of understatement as an effective technique in persuasion, but the fates —and the facts—are against us. Take this matter of the readers-sub (one new sub by each reader) campaign. We have just been informed that NM has the *highest* renewal rate of any magazine in the country. Or, in other words, NM readers are more persistent in their taste for the magazine than are readers of other periodicals. We have also arrived at the unavoidable conclusion that we have the most alert, best informed readership in the magazine field. If you are at all dubious, drop into the office, right after we've committed an error in the pages of the magazine. The calls and the mail will dissolve your last doubts.

We would like to be able to say at this point that it is not all surprising that we can announce a perfect response in new subscriptions. But that, in all disappointment, is not the case. And we can only surmise that many of our readers fear the sub-getting may involve too much time, extra work, etc. But many of our friends who have been sending in those extra subs tell us that the job of getting a new reader or two is a relatively simple job. The thing to do is to give your colleague, relative, or neighbor your copy of the magazine for couple of weeks, spend about fifteen minutes telling him or her why *you* read it, and then abstract the amount of money needed to finance the mailing of fifty-two consecutive issues of the magazine. We could of course consult the slick promotion boys who lurk in the corridors of Radio City as to methods of obtaining new readers, (if we could meet their altitudinous fees). But they could never do one tenth the job you can do. So mark out your contact and see him, and the rest will become part of our new circulation history.

And speaking of the drive to obtain new subs, we hope none of you will miss R. Palme Dutt's warm appreciation of the magazine, expressed in his letter to our readers, which appears on page 11 of this issue.

ONE of the many things of interest to the American youth is the coming three day convention of the Young Communist League. On Friday evening, Oct. 15, at Manhattan Center, several hundred delegates from all over the country, representatives of Communist and non-Communist Youth clubs, will assemble at Manhattan Center together with four thousand youngsters from New York to hear Earl Browder, General Secretary of the Communist Party, Ferdinand Smith, Secretary of the National Maritime Union, CIO, and Staff Sergeant Robert Thompson, recipient of the Distinguished Service Cross for heroism in the Guadalcanal fighting. The convention will deal with the problems facing a war generation, both at the front and in the factory, and in the creation of a new organization with a new name, program, and broadened leadership. NEW MASSES will carry a full report of this convention, but those of you who are fortunately within reach of Manhattan Center should certainly attend this most important of events.

ALL of us who are familiar with Jimmy Savo know him as one of the brighter comics of the Broadway stage. But even his closest friends will be surprised by the Savo that NM will reveal in its pages next week. As part of a symposium on the future of Italy, Savo has contributed a warm, human article as touching in its simple feeling as his antics are hilarious. Other contributors to this discussion include Frank M. Bellanca, noted airplane designer; Michael Garromone, president of Local 1, State, County and Municipal Workers Union, CIO; Demetrios Christophorides, editor of the *Greek American Tribune;* U. S. Sen. Elbert D. Thomas of Utah, Chairman of the Senate Committee on Education and Labor; Rev. A. DiStasi, Minister of the First Italian Presbyterian Church of Pittsburgh; and Peter V. Cacchione, member of the New York City Council. Altogether a varied and informed group of commentators who provide a most pertinent symposium.

In a forthcoming issue, NM will publish an article by Louis Adamic, president of the Committee of the United South Slavic Americans on the Yugoslav Liberation Front. The Yugoslav Liberation Army, the only other organized Anti-Fascist Army outside of Italy fighting on the continent, has become an important item on the agenda in *all* Foreign Offices. Without revealing the contents of this article, we can promise you one of the finest articles on the war.

No discussion of forthcoming features would be complete without noting the series of articles that Joseph North will write on his contacts and observations in his swing around the country. The first of these appeared last week in the form of a column on the Midwest. For further details on the series, we refer you to the back cover.

An article that appeared in last week's issue, A. B. Magil's evaluation of President Roosevelt, has created considerable stir. We are sure that your own reactions to Magil's discussion were fairly vigorous in one way or another. So—let us have your comment on it. We want to know—and other readers want to know—what you think about this subject.

MAY we remind you that to facilitate the work of the post office, we need the zone number of all our subscribers. Please drop us a postcard soon.

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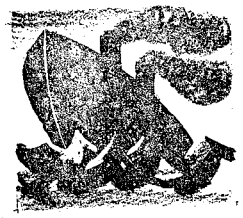
NM SPOTLIGHT

We Have the Ships



IN APPRAISING the present Allied offensive in Italy, Major George Fielding Eliot questions whether the strategic advantage to be gained from the seizure of northern Italy justifies tying down in the Mediterranean theater of war so great a part of Anglo-American striking power. Major Eliot estimates that as many as forty divisions will be required for the conquest of Italy. "The question is, basically, whether it is better to go on past the point of strategic equilibrium in Italy or whether the Germans can be safely contained in the north while the focus of Allied attention shifts elsewhere."

Major Eliot intimates that an attack on northern France from British bases could yield the Allies far greater dividends. Earl Browder has been emphasizing essentially the same point in recent speeches. Like Generals Marshall, Eisenhower, and other high military leaders, Mr. Browder urges the waging of coalition warfare against the enemy's main forces from east and west, "to break his back and spirit, to defeat and annihilate him."

To fortify the position of those supporting the President's second front policy now comes the Senate's sub-committee on War Mobilization, headed by Senator Harley M. Kilgore of West Virginia. The committee's third interim report declares: "For the first time in this global war we have the ships . . . to pour an overwhelming superiority of arms and men in a crushing offensive against Germany. . . . If plans are executed to pack every ship to the last pound and the last cubic foot, *our shipping windfall can deliver the decisive blow in Europe this year. . . . Our fighting schedule can be advanced and the war won more quickly and with less loss of life.*" (Our italics.)

That requires no comment. The ships, the men, the materiel, the facilities are at hand for smashing the Axis in 1943. Only the schedule needs revision.

THE implicit demand for an immediate second front dominates the Kilgore report. But in discussing ways and means to increase shipping efficiency to implement an all-out offensive, the committee advances several highly significant recommendations:

(1) Stabilization of the shipping industry (long advocated by the National Maritime Union whose demands now go to the War Labor Board) is imperative. The NMU has followed a rigorous no-strike policy; the anti-war Lundeberg leadership of the Sailor's Union of the Pacific, by threatening to strike against the war effort, has squeezed for its membership wage bonuses denied the more responsibly organized NMU seamen. Employment of merchant vessels is still casual and insecure. Admiral Land ridiculed and disregarded the stabilization program submitted to him in the form of a wartime shipping program by the NMU, Harry Bridges' West Coast longshoremen, the shipbuilding and communications unions. Now the Kilgore committee insists, in almost identical terms, that stabilization of the industry is essential to strengthen the military offensive.

(2) West Coast longshore labor (Bridges' ILWU) has proved far more efficient, far more capable of handling heavy wartime schedules than labor on the East Coast (Joseph P. Ryan's ILA). Ryan's frenzied insistence on the shape-up system, his refusal to adopt democratic methods practiced in the West, seriously menace the war effort.

(3) Lack of unified administration is enormously wasteful. Control of all cargo shipping should be centralized in the War Shipping Administration.

(4) "A fourth limitation," says the report, "is the lack of adequate machinery for labor participation in the war shipping program." Stress on labor participation applies equally to all war industries. It is to the credit of the Kilgore committee that it insists that the War Shipping Administration bring "labor as well as industry into its councils from the bottom to the top policy bodies," and that it "obtain the support and help of labor in the operations of the war shipping program."

"Look! He's colossal! He can support her without moving a muscle!"

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Too Much Junket

IF ONE were deliberately phrasing statements which, while short of treason, would do the greatest harm to the United Nations, it would be hard to do as well as two of the five senators who have recently returned from a globe-circling junket to the war zones. It is true that the Messrs. Mead, and Russell (Democrats), and Brewster (Republican) have had good things to say about the performance of our troops and about cooperation among the different branches of the armed services. But such remarks have been incidental to the main bill of goods which Senators Lodge and Chandler are trying to sell their senatorial colleagues and the public in general.

First of all, these two say in effect that we ought to delay invading western France. As the New York *Times* reported what three of the senators told a closed session of the Senate: "Caution, it was said, was raised against the opening of new fronts in the European area until sufficient transportation facilities were available to be thrown into such a mission." Note that these remarks were made on the day following release of a Senate Military Affairs sub-committee report which stated that we now had sufficient vessels for the United States to "deliver the decisive blow in Europe this year!"

Another conclusion reached by Senator Lodge, supported by the strategy wrecker, Senator Chandler, is that the Soviet Union, by permitting us access to Siberian bases, could change the entire character of the war. With this thought the Senators join hands with Hearst and the Patterson-McCormick press. Their motive is not even the unchivalrous one of wanting the Soviet Union to do ninety percent of the work against Japan as well as against Hitler; rather it is the scarcely concealed desire to see the Soviet Union so involved in the Pacific as to weaken her western front against the Nazis. We are in agreement with the New York *Herald Tribune* which says in commenting upon the Senators' ideas: "if Russia had to ease her pressure on Germany now Great Britain and this country might find their prospects in Europe and their prospects of concentrating any great strength upon Japan very dismal indeed."

THE Senatorial voyagers have also not failed to take a couple of kicks at our ally Great Britain. Needless to say, the other item that goes with the Senators' strategic program is a strong dash of aggressive imperialism. Sure enough, the Senators have come out for retaining foreign airfields "and other bases" after the war.

It would seem that the performance of Congress on the war was already bad enough without this added effort. The spectacle of Lodge and Chandler acting as sounding boards for the most notorious anti-war elements in our country makes a bad situation positively dangerous. There is only one certain way of combating the enormous damage these men have done. That is for every right-thinking American, as an individual and through organizations, to come out forcefully in favor of true coalition war and to back to the full the war program of our Commander-in-Chief.

The Terror Grows

DESPITE the most brutal reprisals the Danes are not hesitating to defend Denmark's Jewish population. Their reward is an intense campaign of Nazi terror but they are getting Jews into Sweden, hiding them out from storm troopers. It should make us wonder how a people harassed by Nazi bayonets can do so much for the Jews while Washington and London twiddle their thumbs and utter the conventional inanities about sympathy and understanding. Almost two months have passed since the Emergency Conference to Save the Jews of Europe, but neither the American nor British governments has taken any rescue measures. And now reports from Stockholm say that Hitler has issued a new decree for the removal of Jews. If their plight has been grim until now it will become indescribably worse. Berlin has promised that. The Nazis will pack the lethal gas chambers, increase the machine gun squads, if only to compensate for their military defeats by killing and torturing more Jews.

We hope that the delegation of rabbis to the national capital last week and their prayers before the Lincoln Memorial will have some effect on our officials. Thus far they have been too concerned with the niceties of protocol. But if they will abandon the conventions and act, they may even impress London to the point of removing the restrictions on immigration into Palestine. There is more than humanitarianism involved here. Relief measures will be a token of good faith with a people singled out by the Nazis for extermination. The Soviet government has admitted 1,800,000 Polish Jews and is looking after their well being. The least we can do is press for the establishment of an inter-governmental agency that will find asylum for Jews among the United Nations and encourage neutral countries to give them hospitality. Short of a second front, these steps are imperative.

Ramirez vs. Argentina

TWO weeks ago, according to a report just received through Allied Labor News, President Ramirez of Argentina boasted to a meeting of business men. "My anti-Communist campaign is my most important achievement since taking office. I have attacked and will continue to attack all Communist and Communist-led organizations with all the power of my government." It is surprising that such an apt pupil of Hitlerism should be so slow to read the signs of the times. While the whole Nazi edifice crumbles before the onslaught led by the Red Armies, while the entire world rallies more vigorously to the democratic banner of the United Nations, the Ramirez clique continues to plug the old fascist line of attacking all forms of progress as "Communist." Not only does the Argentine usurper fail to comprehend the startling changes that are taking place on the world scene, but he remains blind to the meaning of events occuring right under his nose. For the imprisonment of thousands of trade union and other progressive leaders, including the editor of the highly respectable newspaper *La Prensa,* the outlawing of the legitimate trade union movement and of all political opposition, and the wholesale denial of constitutional rights have failed to dampen the ardor of the masses of Argentinians for democracy and the extermination of fascism.

Throughout the four months of the Ramirez terror the vigor of the democratic movement has been apparent. Recently it has burst forth in new strength to force the first significant concessions from the governing clique. Two victories in the battle to smash Ramirez' hold have been won. Shortly after seizing the government he dismissed the head of the Littoral University, one of the most distinguished educational centers of the nation, and put in his place the notorious fascist, Giordano Bruno Genta. The majority of the students immediately protested. When their protest went unheard they began to absent themselves from classes. The movement grew to gigantic proportions; a few weeks ago it was reported that only two classes were being given, virtually the entire student body was on strike, and sympathetic protests were organized elsewhere. We now learn of the students' victory—Ramirez has been forced to fire Giordano Bruno Genta.

THE second great victory has been won by the packing-house workers whose leader, Jose Peter, one of the staunchest

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supporters of the outlawed Confederation of Argentine Workers—affiliated with the Confederation of Latin American Labor—had been thrown into prison. The packing-house workers went on strike; their struggle culminated in a great anti-Ramirez political demonstration in Buenos Aires on September 29. The strike, joined with the action of the students, inspired widespread sympathy. Even some of the large employers and many shopkeepers cooperated. And now we learn that Dictator Ramirez has again been forced to yield to public pressure—Jose Peter has been released from prison. He has been flown back to Buenos Aires, where 15,000 people greeted him at the airport and a few days later, the militant editor of the Constitution Workers Union forced the release of another great labor figure, its president, Chiarante.

These are encouraging signs of the virility of the Argentine peoples' movement. But the battle is by no means over. Ramirez remains entrenched, surrounded by his fascist colleagues and gunmen. His henchmen come not only from the German-dominated officer class and from other Argentine fascist elements, but also from the Hitler organizations which have been permitted a completely free hand. The Argentine masses have shown their strength and their determination. For final victory they desperately need help from their friends abroad.

India's Food Crisis

THOUSANDS of people are dying of starvation in India. Mob violence and looting are widespread. While the crisis appears to be general, its most acute phases are concentrated in Bengal where the important industrial city of Calcutta is located.

The situation is not a new one. British authorities attempt to explain it as an unfortunate but normal consequence of the dislocations caused by war. They regard it as a condition not peculiar to India. Are not food shortages acute in China, the Soviet Union, Great Britain, and even the United States? The authorities admit they were late in applying remedial measures, but since last year, they point out, they have made every effort to control prices, increase the production of food, and punish hoarders and profiteers. What can the British overlords do if the people won't cooperate? The government spokesman told the Indian Central Legislative Assembly, "No government can by itself defeat the hoarder, the profiteer, and the black market. Only public opinion can do that." And so

The Tax Program

SECRETARY MORGENTHAU'S tax program is an attempt to do the right thing without offending the wrong people. The wrong people in this case being the glowering statesmen in both houses of Coongress and in both parties who are ready to pounce on anything that appears to tread on the toes of the rich and powerful. The end result of the Secretary's attempt is that he has offended the wrong people without doing the right thing. As a consequence he is left suspended in midair, supported neither by friends nor foes. It is important, however, that the administration's friends, the articulate spokesmen for the majority of the people, rouse themselves and rescue the many good things in Morgenthau's program from his bad strategy and bad economics.

The Treasury program is designed to raise $10,500,000,000 in new taxes. Of this sum, $6,500,000,000 is to be obtained by boosting individual income taxes in all brackets, $1,100,000,000 by increases in corporation taxes, $2,500,000,000 through stiffer excise taxes, and $400,000,000 as a result of higher estate and gift levies. Definitely on the plus side in the Treasury program is the repeal of the misnamed victory tax; this would exempt from federal income taxes 9,000,000 persons in the very lowest income group. Repeal of this grossly unfair tax was part of the nine-point program recently adopted by a united front of the CIO, Brotherhood of Railroad Trainmen, National Farmers Union, National Association for the Advancement of Colored People, National Women's Trade Union League, League of Women Shoppers, and National Lawyers Guild. Good too is the proposed jacking up of taxes in the higher brackets to the point where income after taxes of even the wealthiest individuals would be rigorously limited. On the whole the recommended rise in excise taxes is excellent, though we believe that such items as tobacco, beer, and amusements ought to be excluded, since these fall into the class of semi-necessities which help strengthen morale.

Were the rest of Morgenthau's proposals conceived in the same spirit they would have rounded out a genuine win-the-war tax program deserving unqualified support. However, the unfortunate influence of War Mobilization Director James Byrnes is all too evident in the proposals that would place new heavy burdens on single persons earning as little as ten dollars and married persons earning twenty dollars a week. It is true Morgenthau attempts to soften the blow by suggesting a postwar refund of part of the tax, and to cushion it still further by suggesting that taxpayers whose income has increased less than fifteen percent since Pearl Harbor be permitted to use this postwar credit immediately for tax payment. Yet even with these modifications the jump in the surtaxes on persons whose net incomes range from $500 to $6,000 a year is far too great. And the recommended lowering of the personal exemption for married persons from the present $1,200 to $1,100, and for each dependent from $350 to $300, also moves in the wrong direction.

The trouble is that Treasury economics is a split personality. It seeks to construct a tax program on the foundation of two contradictory and mutually exclusive principles: the principle of progressive taxation in accordance with ability to pay, and the principle of regressive taxation in accordance with the "inflationary gap" theory. When Morgenthau cites as the chief inflationary danger the fact that "four-fifths of all the income of the nation is going to people earning less than $5,000 a year," he gives heavy hostages to the reactionaries. For there is no doubt that if "excess" purchasing power is the villain, then the most effective way of eliminating it is through a sales tax.

NEW MASSES has repeatedly pointed out that the "inflationary gap" theory, which even many liberals have uncritically accepted, is a myth. It has been exploded by data released by the Securities and Exchange Commission last February and by the actual experience with price controls. The Treasury would do well to abandon the "inflationary gap" fallacy and tap wealth where it exists in reality rather than in statistical abstractions. In that event it would perhaps be less reluctant to carry out that provision of President Roosevelt's seven-point economic program which calls for taking "by taxation all undue or excess profits." That means, according to the program of the seven progressive organizations, taxing all profits above four to five percent of invested capital. And if Secretary Morgenthau began taking his cue from this kind of program, he would be able to do the right thing because he would have the support of the right people—the people of America.

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disease, poverty and death from starvation continue in the British colony of India.

The magazine *Amerasia* has correctly pointed out: (1) that starvation in India is a phenomenon not peculiar to the war; (2) that remedial measures, no matter how effective on paper, are worthless without the cooperation of the people. Even in normal times India had a permanent food crisis with more than sixty percent of the population living at a semi-starvation level. Chronic famine is a product of colonialism which has intensified rather than ameliorated agricultural conditions. Food is cultivated on tiny strips of land which make the use of modern means of cultivation impossible. Yields are low. Taxes, feudal rents, and interest payments to usurers leave the peasant in a state of perpetual impoverishment. Add to this basic and, under British rule, permanent condition the disruption of communications and the problem of feeding a large army, and it becomes apparent why recent reports estimate that no less than 125,000,000 Indians are suffering from malnutrition.

The Viceroy's Council and subsidiary government agencies have adopted strict controls over food prices and food distribution. Systems of food purchase by government bodies, rationing, programs for price rollbacks, and strenuous campaigns against hoarders and profiteers have been decreed. But as P. C. Joshi of the Indian Communist Party has noted, "All experience shows—as lately demonstrated again in Bengal—that this method won't work. Minus the people's cooperation, and especially minus the cooperation of the people's mass organizations, the hoarder cannot be tackled effectively and the hoarded food cannot be gotten hold of."

The solution of India's food problem cannot be solved independently; it is part and parcel of the larger problem of securing the cooperation of the Indian people in the war. It has been demonstrated time and again that this can be done by leaders of the people's own choosing. Starvation in India will remain acute and the Indian people will not be brought into the war effort of the United Nations until the British solve the political problem by granting a provisional Indian government which will pave the way to genuine nationhood.

Lessons of the Past

WE URGE our readers to study an article by Vladimir Potemkin—an illuminating review with an emphatic moral—in the October issue of *The Communist*. Mr. Potemkin was the Soviet ambassador to Italy and France, and his summary of Soviet foreign policy before this war might well be required reading in the foreign offices of the democratic powers. It underscores again the blunders of the past, the criminal practices pursued by diplomats who shelved their countries' national interests for a policy of estrangement from the Russians. The supremacy of class considerations after the first World War made a coalition for peace almost impossible and led eventually to the debacle at Munich, to the usurpation of the sovereignty of small nations, to the current conflict. All this in the name of saving Europe from Bolshevism while Britain and France and the United States stalked across the chessboard, one seeking hegemony over the others. London in the twenties, Mr. Potemkin reminds us, "feared the excessive strengthening" of its French partner. And for that it used Germany. Washington, in order to collect her war debts, opposed the French imperialists who insisted on exacting the last pound of flesh from Berlin. ("Several years will pass," warns the author, "and the same Americans will think of how to preserve intact their captial investment in Germany.") The traders of the Weimar republic used every moment to exploit the differences among the victors to sharpen their own swords and win positions of dominance in the affairs of the continent.

The fruits of that folly have been described many times before. At the Geneva tribunal, Litvinov warned how they would poison international relations; that short of collective security all other diplomacy was merely the prelude to disaster. And now again it is a distinguished Soviet citizen who gives us much to ponder. On the eve of the tripartite meeting, in fact in the imperative business of welding an enduring coalition, Mr. Potemkin's article is proof gleaned from history that exclusive and narrow alliances, class selfishness, and irrational fears about the "menace" of Communism will lead us into an even more explosive decade than that following 1918. His lessons from the past are to be taken to heart by all Americans.

Add Freedom of Press

THE enormous significance of the Federal District Court decision against the Associated Press monopoly is plain when you look at the situation in Chicago which brought the issue to a head. Up to 1941 the morning newspaper field in that city and in a wide surrounding area of the midwest was dominated by the notorious fascist-minded sheet, the Chicago *Tribune*, which through its anti-American owner, Col. Robert R. McCormick, faithfully broadcast the Hitler line. In that year Marshall Field established a pro-administration, anti-fascist newspaper, the Chicago *Sun*, and sought membership in the Associated Press. Access to AP news was pretty essential to the success of the venture, for as the District Court has said, the "AP is a vast, intricately reticulated organization, the largest of its kind, gathering news from all over the world, *the chief single source of news for the American press*, universally agreed to be of prime consequence." (Emphasis ours.) Colonel McCormick protested the admission of this rival paper, and at the annual meet of the AP the *Sun* was rejected by a vote of 694 to 287.

Here was an infringement of democracy on two counts. Within the AP organization the objection of a single powerful newspaper, thoroughly pro-fascist in policy, was sufficient to cause the application of a competitor to be vetoed. In the second place, it was evident that a deliberate attempt was being made to thwart the development of a progressive newspaper, serving one of the great metropolitan centers of the country, by denying it access to the largest news collecting agency.

Shortly after the AP decision against the Chicago *Sun* the government filed an anti-trust action claiming that the acts of the AP were a "combination and conspiracy in restraint of trade in news, information, and intelligence." The courts were asked to direct that the AP make its news service available to anyone able to pay for it instead of permitting the blackballing of applicants solely on the grounds of competition. The Court decision, which has just been handed down, ruled that "the present by-laws of the AP unlawfully restrict the admission of members, and that further enforcement of them should be enjoined." "The effect of our judgment," the Court concluded, "will be, not to restrict AP members as to what they shall print, but only to compel them to make their dispatches accessible to others."

The decision is a landmark in the struggle for freedom of the press. It means in essence that the Chicago *Sun* scandal cannot be repeated. It loosens the control of the McCormick-Patterson group upon the dissemination of news to the American public. It opens the way for the establishment and growth of new progressive newspapers whose very existence will weaken the position of the pro-fascist section of the press.

UAW Meeting

THERE was nothing cut and dried about the convention of the United Automobile Workers-CIO, the nation's largest union. Out of it emerged a basically clear direction and a strengthened leadership. First, it ought to be noted that the factional conspiracy to oust two central figures in the UAW's win-the-war leadership, Secretary-Treasurer George F. Addes and Vice-President Richard T. Frankensteen,

(*Continued on page 8*)

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GUEST EDITORIAL by Peter V. Cacchione

NEW YORK'S CITY COUNCIL

On November second the voters of New York City will cast their ballots for the election of a new City Council that will take office on next January first.

New York City has a labor movement that embraces one million workers. It is the most politically conscious labor movement in the country as far as national and state issues are concerned. Unfortunately the same does not hold true as far as the New York City government is concerned.

It is almost impossible to conceive that the present City Council represents the progressive-minded population of the people of New York. The Council contains twenty-six members, seventeen of whom are Democrats. From the beginning of 1942, it was evident that the majority in the council was going to continue to play the game of politics-as-usual without regard for the fact that American boys are giving their lives on all fronts in this global war. It is doubtful if there is another legislative body in America that conducts itself in such a frivolous manner.

There is a certain weakness in this legislative body that must be remedied through amendments of the City Charter. Thoroughly disgusted with the years of Tammany misrule, the charter revision commission went to the other extreme and presented a charter to the people that placed many restrictions upon the new City Council. One of the main weaknesses is the lack of power of the Council relative to city finances. The City Council has no power to make appropriations or to increase the budget. The majority in the Council has seized upon this time and again, stating that it is merely a body that can pass resolutions. Of course, this is not exactly the truth. The Council does have power to pass local laws applying to certain fields in the city. But eventually the Council must have equal authority with the Board of Estimate in making appropriations and in passing on the budget, giving it the power not only to reduce items in the budget, but to increase inadequate appropriations for social services.

The Council has a right to set up an investigation committee in any field that affects the life, health, and property of the people of New York. It is this power that the majority of the City Council has refused to use for the benefit of winning the war. An established Council committee would have the power to go into a neighborhood, hold public hearings in a school building relative to price control, thus mobilizing the population for support of government policies. It could use this power to go into a thorough investigation of the salaries of civil service workers which in the main are very inadequate. It could use the same powers to establish a committee to investigate fascist and fifth column groups in New York City spreading racial hatred.

However, the majority in the City Council has established a committee under this clause which permits it to investigate every department in New York City. The purpose of this committee is to smear the LaGuardia administration. This same council has refused to take a position on rent control. It defeated a local law that would have permitted the City of New York to buy the Staten Island Power Company, which could have been used as a yardstick to force the utilities in the other boroughs to lower their rates and would have been the wedge in obtaining eventual public ownership of all electric power.

This same majority tried to protect the interests of the big real estate companies by slashing Mayor LaGuardia's budget by ten million dollars. They did succeed in putting over a cut of three million dollars over the Mayor's veto, while at the same time they refused to pass a resolution requesting Governor Dewey to call a special session of the State Legislature to obtain financial assistance for the city. They refused to do this despite the fact that Governor Dewey had stated he would call such a special session if requested by the Council. A special session of the State Legislature could have taken steps to return a greater portion of the taxes collected by the State. If this had been done, there would have been no need for an increase of taxes on real estate. But the main weakness in the City Council was the refusal of the majority to subordinate their own political ambitions to the main task of winning the war.

The minority in the City Council has functioned well, has fought hard and consistently against the majority, for good legislation. To anyone who is well acquainted with the work of the Council, it is only too evident that a change is sorely needed. The voters of New York City on November second should vote for the progressive labor and win-the-war candidates. They should not only vote for those candidates, but should consistently do everything in their power to see that those members of the majority who refused to carry out their responsibilities during this war period are routed at the polls.

The Communist candidates—Ben Davis, Jr., from Manhattan, Isidore Begun from the Bronx, Paul Crosbie from Queens, and myself from Brooklyn (running for re-election)—are pledged to a program that has as its base the main task, the winning of the war in the shortest possible time. This does not mean that the fight for social services must be abandoned on the home front. On the contrary, the solution of school problems, rent control, ferreting out fifth column groups, adequate appropriations for hospitals, and all other social services must be maintained and extended. This is absolutely necessary because the war can be shortened only by the mobilization of the people to carry out their tasks in all fields of production and war work. Experience has proven that where there is inadequate housing, bad transportation, no rent control, no rigid control of food prices, it affects the morale of the people on the home front and lowers production and war activities. If the Communist candidates are elected, you may be sure that they will fight to put through this program.

Peter V. Cacchione, the first Communist to be elected to New York's City Council, took office in January 1942 backed by the votes of more than 48,000 Brooklynites. During his term of office he has fought with conspicuous vigor on issues close to the people. His and the other Communist candidates' long record of anti-fascist struggle makes them especially deserving of first-choice votes on November 2.—The Editors.

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(*Continued from page 6*)

failed. This conspiracy was headed by Vice-President Walter Reuther in unprincipled alliance with Trotskyites, Social Democrats, and Ku Kluxers. The four top officers of the union, President R. J. Thomas, Addes, Frankensteen, and Reuther, were all re-elected, Thomas alone being unopposed. Most of the eighteen members of the executive board were also re-elected, but at least one of the newcomers, William R. Blakeley, representing region nine (New York and New Jersey), is a definite improvement. He ran as a unity candidate, ousting Edward F. Gray, a Reuther man.

Chief controversy on the issues before the convention developed around the resolutions on incentive pay, a fourth-term endorsement for President Roosevelt, the no-strike pledge, and Negro rights. On all these questions and Reuther-Trotskyite cabal devoted their energies to conniving and confusing, to unabashed Red-baiting and Russia-baiting. They succeeded in winning a three to two majority against incentive pay, but in view of the demagogic campaign which the Reuther forces have been waging for months and the great unclarity among the mass of auto workers on this question, the substantial minority vote showed a rapid growth in pro-incentive pay sentiment. The endorsement of Roosevelt and Vice-President Wallace was voted with only the corporal's guard of Trotskyites dissenting.

THE delegates also adopted a statement opposing all racial discrimination, sharply condemning "mob hatred against Negro citizens and people of other minorities," and affirming "the rights of all minority groups to fully participate in our social, political and industrial life." It was also voted to establish a minorities department in the union, but the Reuther forces refused to permit a Negro to be elected to the executive board to head this department. It was on the no-strike pledge that the Reutherites suffered their most clearcut defeat. Taking their cue from President Thomas, Secretary-Treasurer Addes, and CIO President Philip Murray, the delegates voted overwhelmingly to reaffirm the no-strike pledge without qualifications.

One final point: a large number of delegates, including the Communists, were not aligned with either the Reuther-Leonard or the Addes-Frankensteen faction. Like President Thomas, they opposed all factions, and they supported candidates and issues in the light of the best interests of the country and of the union. It is clear that the UAW will not be able to realize all its tremendous potentialities unless it rids itself of the factionalism that has cursed this union from its inception.

WATCH ON THE POTOMAC by BRUCE MINTON

WASHINGTON MEDLEY

Washington.

THE tax program for 1944, outlined to Congress by Secretary Morgenthau, failed to please anyone, including administration supporters. Framers of tax legislation have three choices: (1) really to go to town in an attempt to raise the needed revenue by putting the screws on corporation profits and on incomes able to absorb the load—that is, a drastic levelling off of incomes above $3,000 a year; or (2) to squeeze the little fellows and to spare the rich; or (3) frankly to abandon the idea of trying to pay for any considerable part of the war burden through taxation.

Secretary Morgenthau straddled. He lacked the courage to face the reactionary uproar sure to greet a realistic people's tax program—and he thereby threw away the only hope of raising the enormous sums demanded by global war. By compromising, Morgenthau penalizes the average wage earner, the average farmer, the hard-pressed white collar employee, the small shopkeeper and businessman. Corporations and those enjoying swollen incomes are allowed to cling to their favored position. Congressional reactionaries have responded to Morgenthau's proposals with crocodile tears for the plight of the poor worker and farmer—the spectacle of Rep. Harold Knutson of Minnesota bemoaning the lot of the oppressed would be hilarious if it were not sickening.

In their eagerness to exploit this situation, the reactionaries—expert in the art of bluff and threat—feint in the direction of a sales tax. The game is to force the people to accept, as an alternative to the greater evil of a sales levy, a raid on small incomes while exempting corporations and the wealthy from their obligations. The Republicans sit back and gloat as the Democrats take the rap in an election year for offering the people such a choice. Leadership has fortunately been taken by the CIO, the National Farmers Union, the Brotherhood of Railroad Trainmen, the National Association for the Advancement of Colored People, the National Women's Trade Union League, the League of Women Shoppers, and the National Lawyers Guild, which are jointly sponsoring an equitable win-the-war tax program.

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THE Congressional Committee for the Protection of the Consumer, headed by Thomas E. Scanlon, has outgrown its original title of the "Fighting Forty." It now claims over sixty House members. As Congress reconvened, the Committee reiterated its insistence that subsidies be granted to protect consumers, and favored incentive payments to increase food production. The Committee "is serving notice that Congress is not unanimously opposed to working in the interest of the consumer and of the working farmer."

Rep. H. J. McMurray of Wisconsin, an active member of the Committe, and—so rare in Congress—an economist who makes sense, remarked to me: "The only way to change a congressman, as you know, is to change the opinion of the literate political majority in his district. That means spreading political literacy in ever wider circles. Up to now, this country, in which every one of us is a consumer, has been so propagandized by the producer interests that the people are inclined to think in producers' terms and not in terms of their own welfare."

The fight against milk subsidies is a case in point. Last week, the National Milk Producers Federation staged an elaborate banquet for over 150 members of the House and Senate. The legislators found themselves surrounded by important and substantial dairy farmers from their own states. Every speaker denounced subsidies on milk, and proposed instead the stamp plan—no substitute for economic stabilization. The arguments offered at the banquet boiled down to unlimited price rises on milk. In the words of one of the guests, "It was about as fishy an exposition of economics as I've ever heard. The special interests were hitting on all twelve cylinders." Much was said about auction sales of dairy cows, the implication being that cows were sold for slaughter. A con-

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gressman who knows dairy farming told me, "In prosperous times, the number of auction sales always increase. Farmers are improving their herds. Don't mention my name, but you can take my word for it that the cows are not slaughtered and that they remain in production. All this talk is a deliberate attempt to falsify the situation."

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INSIDERS point out that the Office of Foreign Relief and Rehabilitation, headed by former Governor Herbert Lehman, is still not functioning. Neither the Lehman group nor its British counterpart, with which the American body is supposed to coordinate its activities, has yet procured any foodstuffs for distribution. For that matter, no civilian agency has been buying food for the liberated nations. All supplies distributed in Italy and Sicily have been released by the army. The civilian agencies for the liberated nations are not in the picture at this time; the lag has its alarming aspects. . . .

Congress is marking time in a big way since it reconvened. In fact, both the House majority and minority leaders, John McCormack and Joseph Martin, are telling their followers not yet back from vacation that there is no need to hurry to the Capitol; rather, they advise absentees to cultivate the voters of their districts because Congress will stall along without much action for another month or so. . . . Washington is much intrigued by William C. Bullitt's mayoralty campaign in Philadelphia. The ineffable Bullitt, who no longer can boast White House support, wangled himself an hour's platform time at the forthcoming Philadelphia Book Fair sponsored by the *Record*. Every author has been severely limited to not more than fifteen minutes of speechmaking. Bullitt's excuse for appearing at the Fair is his forthcoming book which entitles him to pose as a literary man. Unfortunately, Bullitt wants to build his reputation as an author on the new book and to bury memories of his novel, published way back in the twenties, which his political opponents seem to think expresses anti-Semitic, anti-Catholic, anti-Negro, and anti-labor sentiments. Bullitt angrily claims that the attitudes were those of his characters and not necessarily his own. But Bullitt's political rivals point to his own descriptions in the novel, particularly to his use of the phrase "ghetto nose" with reference to a Jew, and to what they consider similar slurs against the Irish, Negroes, and other national and religious groups. Bullitt's Book Fair appearance will be greeted by a newspaper advertisement, paid for by anti-fascists, presenting to the Philadelphia electorate quotations from Bullitt's novel, which they say will prove the candidate's bigotry, his snobbishness, and his sympathy for the fascist credo.

ARMY INTELLIGENCE provides its Washington office with a weekly summary of important events. Under the heading "Sabotage and Subversive Activities," the summary reported the arrival of the two accredited cultural representatives of the USSR, Prof. Solomon Michoels and Lieut. Col. I. Feffer, in Cleveland. That was all. This should be of interest to the many sponsors of national reputation, including Judge Anna Kross, Rabbi Stephen S. Wise, Eddie Cantor, Maurice Schwartz, Sholom Asch, and other outstanding cultural leaders. . . . The United Federal Workers protested to the Civil Service Commission that government employees are being hounded by reactionary investigators. "In case after case," UFW president Eleanor Nelson wrote the Commission, "investigators indicate that they consider union activity, racial tolerance, and opposition to fascism as subversive and un-American. This attitude must appear to the most calm and rational person as a fascist attitude. As a matter of fact, it is fascist." The Commission has promised to meet with the union and to discuss demands that objectionable investigators be dismissed at once.

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A DRIVE is on in Congress to spread democracy by giving the ballot to some 30,000,000 Americans now deprived of the franchise. Senator Green of Rhode Island has offered legislation to allow 11,000,000 soldiers to vote. He would have the ballot delivered to them on an appointed day, and all soldier citizens would be entitled to vote without further red tape. Senator Lucas of Illinois has offered a bill to permit defense workers and others to get to the polls by keeping voting booths open from six AM to nine PM—this will affect approximately 4,000,000. Repeal of the poll tax would enfranchize 10,000,000 white and black in the South. Another 4,000,000 would benefit if residence requirements were waived for the duration. All these bills obviously merit immediate and complete support—the more clamor for their enactment, the more likely they will be passed. . . .

Every report reaching Washington indicates that the summer campaign to convince congressmen that they are answerable to their constituents has had salutary results. "Workers have reached a progressive state of mind on the basis of proper action, and are eager to participate in the nation's political life," a congressman remarked, and union leaders are encouraged by the response to Sidney Hillman's CIO Committee for Political Action. But one unionist, here on a visit from the state of Washington, complains that certain members of the administration do the President and his policies more harm than the lies spread by the Hearst-McCormick-Patterson press. He mentioned Admiral Land of the Maritime Commission, Jesse Jones, Secretary of Commerce, and in particular, Attorney-General Biddle. He branded Biddle as the nation's most effective campaigner for the appeasers and defeatists.

A partial indictment of Biddle, who has given such comfort to the enemies of the President and the war, must include: his Smith-Connally act opinion, which infuriated the unions; his continual Red-baiting directed against all progressives; his use of the anti-trust laws to persecute labor; his attempt to frame Michigan state Senator Stanley Nowack, which public protest forced him to abandon; his Gestapo methods against Spanish veterans and anti-fascists who expressed sympathy for loyalist Spain; his use of agents drawn from private companies to "investigate" American citizens and to collect irresponsible gossip to be used against them; his outrageous proposal to bar Negroes from migrating to industrial centers; his shielding of the KKK, the Black Legion, and the Trotskyite-Socialist anti-war cliques, among the latter of whom he has many personal friends; his refusal to prosecute Coughlin, or Ezra Chase (well known and self-confessed Bundist and Bund recruiter); his anxiety to convict Harry Bridges whom he considers "subversive"; his attempts to reopen the Schneiderman case after the Supreme Court handed down its opinion; his whitewash of Joseph P. Ryan whose reign of terror on the New York waterfront has interfered with crucial war shipping; his refusal to investigate charges of sabotage on the West Coast of lend-lease shipments bound for the USSR; his sponsorship of agents who consider anyone subversive who has read Willkie's *One World*, Steinbeck's *Grapes of Wrath*, or Carey McWilliams' *Brothers Under the Skin*.

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NOTE on my article in NEW MASSES, September 28: Repeated statements appear that Hamburg is completely devastated by Allied bombings. Yet RAF figures show the devastated area to be nine square miles, or approximately twenty-five square kilometers. Building density in devastated areas is about five times higher than the Hamburg average, hence about twenty percent of Hamburg's buildings have been destroyed or badly damaged. The legal area of Hamburg is 415 sq. kilometers, with a population of 1.2 millions, while the area of metropolitan Hamburg is 746 sq. kilometers, with a population of 1.8 millions. The total area reported devastated is about three to four percent. Not more than 50,000 persons have been evacuated from the city. Industry still functions, and damaged factories have been rapidly restored. So much for the argument that air power alone can cripple German industry, or at the present rate of bombings, remove even one large city from production.

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FRONT LINES by COLONEL T.

THE SCHEDULE LAGS

IT WOULD seem that everywhere in the European theater of war the Anglo-American military plans are behind schedule. It has been reported from a number of quarters, particularly London, that the Quebec conference was a "quickie" prompted by a panicky realization that the Red Army offensive was running away with all the Allied schedules and that something had to be done quickly. Since then nothing much, except the enmeshing of two good armies in the campaign of Italy, has been done in the European theater. After Quebec the Red Army summer offensive swelled to a climax and reached the Dnieper line, all but cracking the "Smolensk Gate." It paused for forty-eight hours and, when most of the military experts expected the front to bog down in mud, with the "Russians unable to continue"—the Red Army surged forward in an Autumn offensive which bids fair to merge with a Red Army winter offensive without much pause.

The situation seems to call for another revision of schedule. After all, the strategy of the Anglo-American side in the war cannot afford always to lag behind military events.

The Red Army on October 7 chalked up the following feats:

1. In the center sector, between the two great German bulges at Leningrad and in the bend of the Dnieper, the Soviet High Command, disregarding mud, struck from the Velikie Luki sector, which had been inactive since January. After two days of violent fighting the Soviets captured the railroad junction of Nevel, thus severing the "beam" of the German front, i.e., the railroad running from Leningrad down to Vitebsk, Zhlobin, and Odessa. This feat is especially interesting because the terrain around Nevel is a maze of rivers, lakes, and marshes and is considered virtually impassable at this time of year. From Nevel, which controls two railroads (Polotsk-Velikie Luki and Leningrad-Vitebsk), as well as an important paved highway (Pskov-Gomel), the armies of General Yeremenko threaten Vitebsk from the north and Polotsk from the northeast. Both cities are but sixty miles from Nevel. The importance of Vitebsk has been described in this column more than once. As to Polotsk, its capture by the Red Army would sever the Leningrad-Pskov-Molodechno railroad which is now—after the capture of Nevel—the next important lateral line in the rear of the German northern wing (the next and last is the Pskov-Dvinsk-Vilno line). Thus the entire German grouping before Leningrad would be put in an extremely difficult position.

2. The Red Army struck at the same time against the tip of the German northern salient southeast of Leningrad and captured the highly fortified and important railroad junction of Kirishi where the Germans were blocking the Leningrad-Rybinsk and the Volkhovstroy-Novgorod railroad. Thus a threat has developed not only to the right wing of the troops (partially) blockading Leningrad, but also to the junctions of Tosno, Lyuban, and Chudovo where the Germans sit astride the main railroad from Leningrad to Moscow.

3. Striking at three points, the Red Army, despite rain and mud, forced three crossings of the Dnieper: near the confluence of the Pripet with the Dnieper, about fifty miles north of Kiev; south of Pereyaslavl, fifty miles southeast of Kiev; and near Kremenchug, in the Big Bend. The first two crossings together constitute incipient pincers against Kiev and the one at Pereyaslavl, fifty miles southeast of Kiev, also constitutes a threat to the junction of Mironovka (twenty-five miles to the southwest of the bridgehead) which controls the doubletrack railroad running from Fastov to Dniepropetrovsk parallel to the Dnieper and south of it at an average distance of some thirty miles. On this railroad depends the entire German defense of the upper arm of the Dnieper bend. From the Kremenchug bridgehead the Red Army threatens three key-junctions on the same railroad—Znamenka, Koristovka, and Pyatikhatka (forty, twenty-five, and forty miles from the bridgehead, respectively). Without this railroad the Nazi defense of the Dnieper bend would would be virtually impossible.

4. Finally, after breaking the last resistance of the enemy on the Taman Peninsula, the Red Army is mopping up the remnants of the German troops in the marshes of the Kuban estuary.

The front today is hardly fifty miles shorter than it was on July 12—Mr. Hanson Baldwin of the New York *Times* to the contrary notwithstanding. The Soviet summer offensive has merged with the autumn offensive. Thus the great bulk of the Wehrmacht remains engaged on the Eastern Front, *but there is no second front in Western Europe*. This is why I claim that the grand strategy of the Western allies is far behind the calendar of events.

IN ITALY we are fighting three or four German divisions, which some commentators are endeavoring to blow up into six or even ten divisions. We are outflanking Rome in the east, but that is about all. Late in the larger sense, we are also late in the side-show of the Mediterranean. In the middle of September the Yugoslav Army of Liberation held the ports of Fiume, Susak, and Split. It held—and still holds—the big islands strung along the Dalmatian coast. The Headquarters of the Army of Liberation says that there are only five German divisions in Yugoslavia. But still we have not done a thing to help that Army, except send a few officers who certainly have less experience than the Partisans' own commanders. Now the ports are lost to the Germans. Again we are late. It will be much harder to land now than it would have been after Mussolini's "resignation" and even after the September 8 armistice.

We learn that a rebellion has flared up in Crete, but that the Germans have put it down. Again there seems to have been no coordination between the underground in Crete and our Command. We seem so afraid of the underground. Perhaps there are those who would rather see it burn itself out than help fan it in time. In the Aegean we are actually engaging in more island-hopping with the Germans countering us. All this would have been unnecessary if we had only gone into Yugoslavia in force, and thence into Greece. The islands with the German garrisons would have remained high and dry and withered away. These are some of the reasons why I claim our strategy is sadly behind time.

IN THE Pacific we appear to be moving ahead. Finschhafen has been taken and we are advancing on Madang. The Japanese have been starved out of Kolombangara and now only Bougainville lies between us and the big base at Rabaul. Our big naval task force has attacked Wake. One of our subs has sunk a passenger ship in the Straits of Tsushima. Mountbatten has arrived in New Delhi. Thus in some sectors of the Pacific theater we seem to be on the offensive and in others we are getting ready to be, except in the crucial one—China. However, it appears on the winter agenda.

IF YOU compare the German and Japanese "fortresses" to two houses, the strategic picture appears thus: we are blasting the eastern wall of the German house, rattling its southern wall, and punching holes in the roof. As to the Japanese "house"—we are rattling the eastern, western and southern walls and throwing pebbles on a small part of the roof. Nowhere in the world is there a coalition squeeze-play.

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R. PALME DUTT

LONDON
ENGLAND

Dear Reader:

May I take the liberty? I am an English reader of New Masses. You are a subscriber of New Masses in the United States. We don't know one another. But we have many common bonds. Not only common bonds which unite our two peoples in the struggle against fascism, but also deep common bonds in our concern for human progress and complete political and social emancipation--for those great issues for which New Masses stands. Therefore, when the editor of New Masses asked me to write you in order to enlist your help in serving our common cause by helping New Masses, I was very glad to respond.

I should like to say what New Masses means to those of us who have the privilege and opportunity to read it in Europe. New Masses is undoubtedly one of the outstanding world journals of the left. Week by week - sometimes more irregularly as the fortunes of ocean and air transport under present conditions permit - it brings us the picture of progressive thought in America. More, it brings us the thoughts, aspirations and struggles of men and women striving clearly and courageously to face the same kind of problems with which we are grappling here, which more and more are the common problems of progressive mankind all over the world. It would be a loss not only to American thought and opinion but to world opinion if New Masses were to go under for lack of adequate support. But it's you in the United States above all who can and must take the necessary steps to assure its maintenance and extended influence. This is your privilege and responsibility.

What is it that the editor of New Masses asks you to do? It's very simple. He asks you personally to win new readers as subscribers to New Masses. As I write these words a pang of jealousy passes through me. I edit a monthly journal of left opinion in this country. The Labour Monthly, which used to sell 50,000 copies. Now this has been cut down by the restrictions in wartime paper supplies to 12,000 copies in microscopic type on a few midget pages of flimsy airmail paper. For every subscriber who gets a copy we have to turn away five who clamour for it. One copy often passes through ten, twenty, even thirty hands. You in America are not yet hemmed in by such restrictions. You can extend circulation simply by winning new subscribers. Haven't I reason to be jealous? Haven't you reason to feel you must use your opportunity to the full? By winning new subscribers you can strenghten New Masses and extend its political influence. Is it not worth doing?

We live in times of great issues, when the fate of the world is being decided by the action of every one of us. Words and thoughts are indispensable generators of action, moulders of unity, guides of the peoples in the present struggle for freedom. We must see that the mighty force which is represented by our free press is sustained and strengthened. This is no mere appeal for a journal, but an appeal for a serious contribution to the victory of our common aims by helping strengthen an organ of opinion which is working to play its part in building the world of the future.

Yours in the common cause,

R. Palme Dutt.

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BEHIND US-BRITISH RELATIONS

The dangers of an exclusive alliance. Contradictions and potential conflicts. Joseph Starobin surveys some recent trends in high circles. Keys to the coalition's future.

ONE of the surest signs of the great transition through which we are now passing is to be found not only in the debate on our relations with Russia, but in the ever-more-public discussion of Anglo-American affairs. Winston Churchill's two visits this year made the connection between these two developments very graphic. For we now know that the British Prime Minister's trips in May and August involved Allied decisions in the military and political sphere, tending to abandon genuine coalition with the Soviet Union; interestingly enough, on both occasions, and in his June 30 speech in between, Churchill broached the necessity of a lasting tie between the United States and Great Britain.

Underlying the entire debate there is of course the changing relationship of forces brought about by the decline of Germany's power. The decisive policy-making circles in both our own country and Britain no longer fear a German victory. They therefore feel themselves free to consider, not only the transition to the peace, but the content and terms of postwar relations between them. The Anglo-American alliance, which came into being in 1940 in the face of the desperate necessity to overcome Germany's bid for world domination, is now being re-examined, since the conditions which consolidated that alliance are no longer operative. The present discussion, even when it urges a lasting alliance, is only a way of conducting that re-examination in public.

This does not mean that the alliance is already dissolved. No more than it would be true to say that the difficulties of the Anglo-Soviet-American coalition cannot be resolved, and the coalition made to endure. For one thing, actual fighting is by no means over, and the absence of a second front this year means that the costliest and bloodiest portion still faces the British and American people. And the war that is yet to be seriously fought in the Far East obviously enforces continued Anglo-American cooperation.

But it is true that the *content* and *terms* of this Anglo-American alliance are being re-appraised. All forces are estimating their probable policies in the light of the fact that only three powers will count decisively on a world scale, and in the capitalist sphere only two will remain as first-rate world centers. American circles are appraising this fact from the point of view of the tremendously increased economic and military strength of the United States—far greater, and far more concentrated for good or evil than at any time in our history.

TO BEGIN with, the question of whether the United States will cooperate with the other nations at all is far from settled. Consider the fate of the Fulbright resolution in Congress. Here was a general forty-word statement whose purpose was to commit this country to world cooperation in the name of both major parties. It was deliberately general, for the very good reason that the exact degree and the terms of cooperation were still a matter of hot debate. But while the House passed this declaration overwhelmingly, it does not even satisfy the Senate. The New York *Herald Tribune* publishes a cartoon showing Maggie sitting on Jiggs' evening clothes, while out at the gate Uncle Joe and John Bull are waiting. Maggie is the Senate. The plight of Jiggs, forced to stay at home, reveals that even the simple principle of the Fulbright resolution is not yet acceptable to powerful sections of both parties.

But even if we are to assume that the Senate is influenced by a "lunatic fringe," it is clear that the principle of cooperation is being hedged in by so many qualifications that the whole idea may be nullified.

Anne O'Hare McCormick says in the New York *Times* on September 8 in discussing Mackinac that the issue "is no longer whether we will cooperate in maintaining peace; it is how, to what extent and in what ways we will cooperate." Agreed. But the current debate on the degrees and methods of cooperation discloses a powerful tendency in both major parties to insist on so many conditions that we would not be cooperating except on American terms. And cooperation on exclusively American terms would not be cooperation at all. It would either be isolation, or as is more likely, the exact converse of isolation: an attempt at unilateral world domination.

The essence of the present situation then is a struggle between those who want a really straightforward and intimate alliance with other countries, as against those who wish to qualify such an alliance to the point where it would be meaningless. Are we going to lay down such conditions as will mean an effort to run things on our terms, or are we prepared to realize our destiny on the principle of a leader among equals?

A GREAT deal of the discussion now takes place on the economic level. While my chief concern is the political level, it is nevertheless worth investigating some of the economic aspects for the insight they give into the very sharp thorns in the path of Anglo-American unity.

Take the two currency proposals, one associated with the British economist Lord Keynes, and the other with Harry White of the US Treasury. I have no intention or presumption to discuss these plans in detail. Both are tentative drafts, on which conferences are now taking place in Washington.

Both plans propose some kind of international agency to stabilize currency relations. The Americans have the gold, and the largest national income per capita. Their plan provides that participation-control of other countries be based on gold holdings and the level of national incomes. Other currencies shall be fixed in terms of gold. By this plan, the United States would have a forty-five percent control, the United Kingdom 11.8 percent, and the British dominions 9.2 percent. The British on the other hand, with their vast interests in trade, their depletion of gold, and their sterling bloc outlook want an international agency in which participation-control is based on the pre-war volume of trade. In the Keynes plan, the United Kingdom gets a twenty-one percent vote, the Dominions a 22.5 percent vote and the United States only a 17.5 percent vote.

Now this exact reversal of control in both plans might be amusing, for the joker is so obvious. But even though both sides expect to bargain before coming to conclusions, the interesting thing is the sharp divergence in the initial schemes. It is also significant that the British plan is far more flexible, more imaginative, while the American plan is fairly rigid, and tends to make the entire basis of trade relations dependent on the American say-so. This greater readiness to work with more comprehensive mechanisms and more resilient ones, is not necessarily an inherent British characteristic. But it reflects the weakened position of Great Britain both historically and in the process of this war. The intransigeance and bluffness of the American plan reflects the immense strengthening of this country *vis a vis* the rest of the capitalist world. As I will show later, this British readiness to compromise and overcome differences is a factor of great importance in the world situation.

THIS same bluff, intransigeant attitude will be found on every hand. The other day the vice-chairman of our Maritime Commission, Rear Admiral Vickery, returned from a visit to London. Perhaps exaggerating a bit for the benefit of our reporters, he announced that he had told

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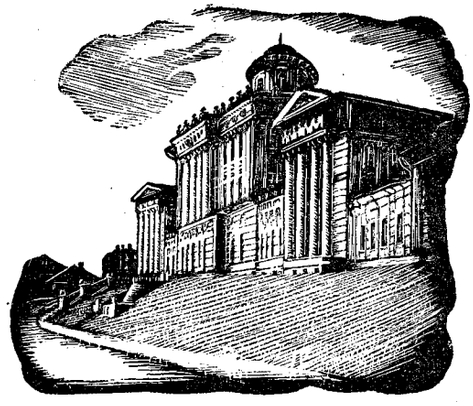
the British we intended to remain a maritime nation after the war. We were going to have a merchant fleet of well over twenty million tons against a probable fifteen million for the British, and we intended to take a proportionate share of world trade. And as he put it, we were ready to cooperate on that basis, but no other. He rubbed it in by declaring that even if the British were already building ships with an eye to postwar commerce while we were concentrating on war vessels, our superior capacity and productivity would enable us to compete under any circumstances. The implication for the British, who have depended to such a large extent on income from their merchant marine, is obvious.

The same kind of thing takes place over airpower. Mrs. Luce made a national reputation by demanding freedom of the air over everybody else's property while asserting American "sovereign rights" over our own. With a mordant irony, the President deflated some of these more arrogant pretensions at his press conference last week, when he inquired what we should possibly gain by actually owning the Croydon airfield near London.

THE problem of rubber is equally illuminating. Before the war, the United States imported most of its rubber from the Anglo-Dutch holdings in Malaya and the East Indies. It is true that the rubber cartel charged Americans fancy prices; but it is also true that American imports not only involved the economy of millions of people in the Far East but served to give British and Dutch nationals about a quarter of a billion in dollars each year with which to buy our own exports.

Today, the United States is on the road to self-sufficiency in rubber, thanks to our synthetic industry and the Latin American development. A special article in the Royal Institute's bulletin on international affairs for March 6 notes this with alarm, concealed in characteristic British understatement: "The solid fact that the United States has been put to a great temporary difficulty in this war through dependence on overseas rubber supplies, and that great vested interests in the synthetic rubber industry are being created, should be sufficient in themselves to dampen any optimism which may exist among producers of natural rubber, and more generally among those who have the future prosperity of Malaya and the Netherlands Indies at heart."

The British are worried not only on this score but others. Their gold reserves were diminished as early as the winter of 1940-41 to pay for American supplies. Likewise their holdings in American securities. They face stiff American competition in all markets—North Africa to Latin America—and noticeably even in the Middle East. The enormous industrialization of Canada



and Australia, and to a lesser extent Latin America and India, creates a situation where the United Kingdom is not sure of retaining either its investments or its export market within the sterling area. The accumulation of Canadian, Australian, Argentine, and American capital results in a tendency to give the British investor a stiff fight for the all-important control of markets and resources.

Although the British are doing a great job toward self-sufficiency in agriculture, and are rationalizing their industries, their basic position remains that of a debtor nation, which is dependent on imports, and dependent on a market for exports. Imports from the United States would have to be paid in gold, or in dollars gained by exports to the United States. Or else by exports to the dominions and other areas, which already accumulated dollars from their own exports to the United States.

Thus the question of whether the United States insists on its gold standard, whether it offers a trade policy enabling the British and Dominions producers to sell in this country and thus accumulate dollars for imports from this country, is a very acute one.

Of course, the United Kingdom is not reconciled to such a degree of dependence on the United States. Lord Beaverbrook's appointment to develop postwar aviation is only one sign. The other day, Sir Clive Bailleu, formerly representative to the Combined Purchasing Board in Washington, en route to take up the post of deputy president in the British Federation of Industries, told an American luncheon that the British would certainly strive to become a creditor nation again. But he also implored his audience "not to let their creditor position upset world trade," and said this country would simply have to admit foreign goods.

The British dilemma, it is clear, is one of the factors making for a greater desire on their part for genuine collaboration with the United States. This desire is a positive factor in the situation, of which American democrats can take good advantage. But it must not be supposed that the British motive is, in its essence, any nobler. British capitalists have undoubtedly tried to fight the war in such a way as to preserve their position, and if possible to improve it, which is natural. And it can be said of both parties that even *through cooperation*, there would be an effort to achieve the best possible advantage, which is of course a law of combinations.

But for the practical purposes of the future, the cooperative approach on both sides is the one that will tend to minimze open conflict, will make the reconstruction of the devastated areas speedier, and will tend to forestall sharp antagonisms. The failure of the United States to cooperate after the first world war, like the failure of the British to respond to American initiative in 1931, is by now the familiar object lesson.

THIS brings me to the political level again. It was one of Earl Browder's most fertile insights that he emphasized the importance of dealing with Anglo-American relations within the framework of relations with the Soviet Union and the whole democratic movement in Europe.

For it is clear from what I have sketched above that the Anglo-American alliance, if left to itself, will either fall into a bitter conflict under the weight of its own contradictions and the ascendancy of the most reactionary elements in both countries, or else may become a predatory concert in opposition to the democratic aspirations of the peoples of Europe supported by the Soviet Union.

On the other hand, while the Soviet Union may have only a limited role in solving the difficult economic issues between this country and Britain, its inclusion as an indispensable partner of a world alliance will serve to minimize the influence of reactionary elements in both countries, and to that extent provide a platform on which the trends of compromise and negotiation can operate.

What would happen to an exclusive Anglo-American alliance is already clear from the record. In the economic sphere, it brings out the most rabid expressions on both sides, and mutual preparations to beat each other out. And I do not here even begin to touch on the complex of issues in Asia.

In the political sphere, Forrest Davis has already announced in the *Saturday Evening Post* that exclusive Anglo-American cooperation involves disastrous anti-Soviet intrigue and the concept of ruling Europe at the expense of the self-determination of its peoples, with the ultimate direction of conflict with the USSR.

Exclusive Anglo-American alliance would probably not only sharpen every political issue between reactionary and democratic forces, but would ultimately prove unreal, and leave the path open to the chaos of reckless conflict in every sphere.

Exclusive Anglo-American collaboration has already resulted in the postponement of

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the second front, and the prolongation of the war, bringing about a crisis in relations with the peoples of Europe and with Russia which may or may not be overcome by the events and conferences of the next few months. In fact, in the development of the French liberation movement, the difference of American and British aims served for a while to help the liberation movement; the acute stage arose last spring when London and Washington bridged the gap between them, but failed to include the USSR in its policies. It was only the strength, skill, and unity of the French liberation forces, which cancelled out some of the harmful effects of Anglo-American policy. Whether the same thing will happen in Italy or Yugoslavia remains to be seen; perhaps the Mediterranean commission, if it really functions, will eliminate the implications of an exclusive Anglo-American policy.

On the other hand, a genuine three-power alliance would not only rapidly decide the issue on the battlefield against Hitlerism, but would open the way toward an accommodation of the interests of the major capitalist powers with those of the peoples of Europe and the USSR on a democratic basis. At least only such an approach stands the chance of achieving that accommodation.

It may very well happen that such an approach will also have unprecedented effects in the economic sphere. The White and Keynes plans, characteristically, make no room for the USSR in their economic agency, for it is allotted a one percent share in the participation-control of both plans. While there are basic differences between capitalist and socialist trade, the USSR's trade policies, under a different political setting than in the past, may very well play a much greater role in the future.

It is well to recall Maxim Litvinoff's declaration to the economic conference of 1933: ". . . Although perfectly able, thanks to the success of the first Five-Year Plan, to develop its own economic life independently of imports and foreign markets, the Union of Socialist Soviet Republics had no desire to shut itself off from the rest of the world by economic barriers, or to withdraw into its own economic shell. It had no propensity toward 'autocracy,' and had no objection to advantageous imports of foreign goods."

The USSR is capable of taking a great deal of British and American exports of heavy goods, in a favorable political setting. And the nature of her economy is such that for an indefinite period, she may pay in gold, without requiring the export of her own goods to pay for her imports. The British have already recognized this by the formation of an Anglo-Soviet trade association, as they were so quick to recognize it even in 1921.

This point can be easily vulgarized, since in the last analysis, capitalist trade involves a monopolist grip on markets which would be impossible in dealing with the USSR. On the other hand, the possible scope of Soviet action in European economic reconstruction, and in modifying the conflict between the USA and Great Britain may prove to be different from that in the past, conforming to the basic change in the position and influence of the USSR.

Certainly, genuine Anglo-American collaboration or alliance is in the interests of the American labor and democratic movement, representing as it does the most permanent interests of the nation. And if such an alliance is possible only, as I have tried to show, as part of Anglo-Soviet-American collaboration, then it is clear that the labor and democratic movement in this country has to make the main fight along these lines.

In fact the closer understanding that the American labor and democratic movement has with its British counterpart, the clearer it will become to us that exclusive Anglo-American relations are not the answer. For the British labor movement is acutely aware of the primacy of its Soviet alliance; in fact large sections of the British public feel that association with the United States not only tends to prevent the progress of British labor but draws the British people away from their deep feeling for the USSR, and their newly-roused understanding that the problem of Europe can no longer be settled in the old balance of power fashion, but must be settled on the basis of the twenty-year Anglo-Soviet treaty. Sir Stafford Cripps, for example, after the recent flood of Anglo-American harmony speeches, was quick to declare that this must not entail a weakening of the Soviet tie, a reflection of what large masses of Englishmen feel.

But for the sake of such a three-power relationship, it will not be enough to consider the British simply as arbiters of Anglo-Soviet relations. Our interest in friendship with the USSR is world-wide, and has yet to reveal its full significance in the Far East, where it may happen that the only obstacle to a rampant American imperialism will be the direct tie of this country and the USSR, in harmony with China.

Certainly, at the present moment, an American initiative for a full Soviet-American understanding is decisive for the entire coalition. Such an understanding a year ago might have prevented the "Mediterranean strategy," associated with Churchill and Marshal Smuts, from superseding and postponing as it did the second front in France. Such a direct Soviet-American tie will in fact make it easier for the British democratic forces, who find themselves under constant pressure from those in their own country who take inspiration from the worst aspects of American policy.

And the domestic implications of what I have said are equally obvious. An exclusive Anglo-American alliance involves ultimately the hegemony of the most reactionary forces in both countries. In the United States, if not in England, that could easily involve the supremacy of American fascism.

Thus, in the wonderful phrase of Jean Jaures, we have to take from the "altar of the past the fire, not the ashes." That is if we want anything like a luminous, living future.

JOSEPH STAROBIN.

American soldiers somewhere in England make friends with British women also in uniform. The alliance of their countries in real coalition with other allies will speed their victory.

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UNITY WITH THE COMMUNISTS?

Dr. Alexander Meiklejohn and Earl Browder present their views on the issue of united action between liberals and members of the Communist Party.

This article by Dr. Alexander Meiklejohn was originally written as a contribution to the NEW MASSES *discussion of unity between Communists and non-Communists, which was initiated by an exchange of letters between Max Lerner and A. B. Magil. Because our letter to Dr. Meiklejohn inviting his participation was delayed in reaching him, his article did not arrive till some time after we had closed our symposium. However, since he has raised questions which require further discussion, we are publishing his article and have invited Earl Browder, general secretary of the Communist Party, to comment on it. We would welcome further comment by our readers. Dr. Meiklejohn is one of the country's foremost educators. His work at Brown University, Amherst College, the Experimental College of the University of Wisconsin, and the San Francisco School for Social Studies has made his name a symbol of the progressive spirit in education. His latest book is "Education Between Two Worlds."—The Editors.*

THE Communist Party in the United States is facing a desperately important decision. For many years its relations with other American parties and groups have been troubled by hatreds, suspicions, and misunderstandings. Members of the Party have explained that condition as caused by the misrepresentations of their enemies, who are trying to bolster up a weakening capitalist order. That explanation is partially true. But it is not the whole truth. The bitterest enmities and suspicions have arisen, not from relations with the capitalists, but from relations with groups which are, in theory, nearest to the orthodox Communist position itself.

In pre-war days the hatred and suspicions of which I am speaking had done great damage to progressive action in the United States. But with the coming of the war and, especially, as we face the making of the peace after the war, that evil is enormously increased. Relations between the United States and the Soviet Union will probably be the most important factor in the framing of the postwar world. If, as seems probable, the misunderstandings which now surround the Communist Party in the United States should be extended to our dealings with the Soviet Union, the results will be disastrous. The future of the world, not to mention that of the Communist Party itself, seems to rest largely on that issue. What then, can be done about it?

It is, I assume, with this problem in mind that NEW MASSES raises the question: "Can Communists and non-Communists cooperate?" The editors have done this by inviting Mr. Magil and Mr. Lerner to cooperate in starting the discussion. Do they, in any real sense, cooperate? I do not think so. Both papers are brilliantly written. And yet I doubt if either of them has the slightest effect on the writer of the other. I say this, not as criticism of the writers, but to indicate that the difficulty which the Communist Party faces is deeply perplexing. The first step toward the solving of the problem is to get it adequately stated.

THE facts involved are, I think, plain. In general one can say that almost invariably, under American conditions, when cooperation between Communists and non-Communists has been tried, it has failed. There are in the United States bourgeois liberal groups working for the modification or abolition of the system of free competitive enterprise. To many such groups that system seems to be, under present conditions, hostile to the principles and purposes of the Constitution. In specific situations, therefore, I have often seen cooperative enterprises set up between these progressive groups and their Communist allies. And always, in my experience, those enterprises have ended in disaster. That result has been so regular, so seemingly inevitable, that it gives evidence of a permanent blocking factor which makes successful cooperation between these two groups impossible. What is needed, therefore, is clear-headed thinking which will discover what that factor is and how it can be eliminated. If the situation is what I think it is, mere good intentions are worthless. Vows of friendship, of common hatred of a common enemy, are beside the point. The abolition of the Comintern is little more than a straw in the wind. The American Communist Party has, I think, come to a decisive crisis in its career. If it is to be a useful American party it must discover why, thus far, it has been unable to cooperate with any other American party. Unless it can do that, its effect upon the

The Civilian

The object of gunfire is to destroy the enemy;
the vein sings
In the engagement like a charged wire,
then the soldier sleeps.
The fighting man is equipped,
an element and flawless.

The civilian is a target for his own thoughts,
still quiet enough
To be dismayed by terror and waste, the dive
bomber slipping down the newsreel,
The houses opened like fruit, the splinter
whirling in the eye.

The mind of the civilian is sharpened even
by distant battle:
It worms through the deadly music, the
fashionable round words,
The flags draped on reality as a corpse
is lowered at sea.

The civilian is useful who accepts the creative guns;
who sees in destruction
The building not yet risen on the ruins; who walks
humbly over the rib-cages
Of heroes to the white city; who knows he may
have to take it by assault.

DON GORDON.

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cause of human freedom and justice, to which it is so passionately devoted, will be, in the future, harmful rather than helpful. And the harm may be enormous.

The charge which non-Communists bring against Communists when attempts at cooperation have broken down is very familiar. "You cannot trust them," the liberals say. "They will work with you so long as they can use you; then they will throw you overboard. And, further, through all the period in which they are using you, they are looking forward to the time when they can use someone else in your place. They talk about cooperation but they do not, in their relations with others, know what the word means." That charge is so regularly made that whether it is valid or not, it simply cannot be ignored by those against whom it is directed. It points the finger at some characteristic of Communist principle or practice which stands in need of careful scrutiny. What is that characteristic?

Of one thing I am certain. The trouble does not arise from a lack of personal integrity in the members of the Party. The Communists whom I have known are, in remarkable degree, persons of high integrity. On the whole they are motivated, not by expectation of personal gain, but by a genuine willingness to sacrifice themselves for the general welfare. I must not draw too wide a generalization from my own limited experience. And yet I am certain that, so far as personal integrity is concerned, no adequate reason can be given for rating the Communists below the Republicans or Democrats or Socialists, among whom, in spite of sharp differences of opinion or of interest, cooperation in a democratic community is possible.

ANOTHER explanation commonly given for the break-down of cooperation must also be rejected. The difficulty does not come from the fact that the Communists are striving for one goal and the non-Communists for another. We are not asking, primarily, why the Communist Party cannot cooperate with the National Association of Manufacturers. On the contrary we are asking why two groups which are equally opposed to what that Association stands for, cannot work together with mutual respect and mutual understanding. There are many liberal groups and leaders in the United States who are, in varying forms and in varying degrees, committed to what Mr. Browder describes as "the ideas of scientific socialism." Max Lerner is one of them. Roger Baldwin is another. The question is "Why cannot men of this type join forces with those whom Mr. Browder leads?"

Still another explanation, commonly offered by the Communists is, I am sure, equally untenable. We are often told that the liberal progressives are misled about the Communists by the propaganda of Adolph Hitler and of the Dies committee. This argument would have us believe that men like Lerner and Baldwin base their opinions about the Communists, not on what they see with their own eyes and hear with their own ears, but on what foreign and domestic hired agents of a fascist capitalism tell them. I wish the Communists would not use that argument when dealing with the men whom I have mentioned. I do not deny the existence or the general effectiveness of such propaganda. But to explain the opinions of Lerner or Baldwin as caused by it is merely to add to an already intolerable mass of misunderstanding and confusion.

What, then, is the source of the difficulty? It is, I am sure, one of tactics rather than one of goal. There is no basic incongruity between the ultimate aims of the Communist Party and the fundamental principles of the Constitution of the United States. But there is a basic incongruity between the tactics of the "class-struggle" theory, as now interpreted by the American Communist Party, and the American program of democratic political action. The difference is one between the tactics of war and the tactics of peace. I am well aware how much bitter and unscrupulous warfare underlies the processes of American political and economic life. I am not denying the existence here of the class struggle. And yet the fact remains that, as a people, we Americans are committed to the belief that even the fiercest and most fundamental conflicts among us can be settled by peaceful political action. Our majorities and minorities, our parties in power and parties out of power, are working together as well as working in opposition to one another. But the Communist Party seems, at present, unable or unwilling to accept that political faith. It believes that our American society is at war within itself and that, therefore, tactics of warfare are necessary in dealing with its problems. For that reason, the Party adopts the procedures of the military mind, both in its own internal discipline and in its relations with other groups. The bourgeois liberal, whom it invites to join in cooperation, is potentially or actually an enemy rather than a friend. That is why he can be used and then dropped. And this means that when the Communist asks for cooperation he is asking for something which he cannot give in return. And, further, it must be remembered that men who are at war, no matter what their personal integrity, cannot be trusted to mean what they say. War is deceit. That is why the Communist asks for himself in America civil liberties which, when occasion arises, he refuses to others. He would like the liberals to be at peace with him while he is at war with them.

There are three brief remarks which I should like to add to this discussion.

First, my argument is an attempt at cooperation. It will, therefore, probably fail. But I am willing to take the risks of that failure because the need of cooperation is so urgent.

Second, I may be charged with unfairness because I have found fault only with the Communists. But these are, I think, good reasons for that apparent bias. The question at issue is initiated by NEW MASSES. It is the Communists who, as usual, are vigorously attacking the problem. They are asking what they can do about it. And it is that question which I have tried to answer. If anyone wishes assurance that I have made corresponding attacks on other parties, I can refer him to twenty-five or thirty years of writing and speaking from which those attacks have not been absent.

Finally, I wish to express my admiration of NEW MASSES' action in starting this discussion. It gives evidence that the Communist Party is alive to the issue and is determined to do something about it. I wish them success in the venture. I hope the day will soon come when, free from suspicions and hatreds, the Party will take its place as an active and recognized sharer in the democratic procedures of American political life.

ALEXANDER MEIKLEJOHN.

MR. BROWDER COMMENTS

THE editors of NEW MASSES have asked me to comment on Dr. Meiklejohn's contribution. I am glad to do this since in what I consider his misconceptions about the Communists I find no trace of ulterior motive but only an honest attempt to find his way through the confusions of our day.

It is difficult to disprove the charge that Communists beat their wives. It is equally difficult to prove to Dr. Meiklejohn that Communists do not, as he puts it, consider "the bourgeois liberal, whom it [the Communist Party], invites to join in cooperation, is potentially or actually an enemy rather than a friend." But both statements are equally false. Communists are equally against wife-beating, and against any prejudice or preconception dictating a hostile attitude toward any person except upon the basis of current action and attitude on issues of principle. If Dr. Meiklejohn had more experience in cooperation which included Communists he would not need this assurance. Millions of American workers have such experience, and thousands of "bourgeois liberals"; among them

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"I don't see why people are yelling about higher prices. If they don't like it, they don't have to buy."

only a tiny though vocal minority have ever voiced any complaints against the quality of Communist cooperation.

It is interesting to examine concretely such complaints as have been made. Almost invariably such complaints are found to be from persons or groups who have changed their minds in the course of events about the soundness or desirability of the cooperative action which has been engaged in, and who think the Communists should also change along with them. That was the case in all examples of disagreement with Communists in the course of the Spanish republican struggle; the Communists were loyal to the end to the Spanish republic led by "bourgeois liberals," but the persons who denounced us were themselves participants in projects of armed insurrection to overthrow that republic in the midst of its war against Franco, or defended such attempts after the event.

There is a half-truth in Dr. Meiklejohn's observations of a "war mentality" in the Communist approach to cooperation with other groups. The true half is that the Communists have for years understood that the world was entering a war which would decide its destiny for generations. We therefore insisted that the progressive, the anti-fascist, united front should establish a discipline which would preclude actions that would play into the hands of the enemy. We bitterly denounced all such actions, not as disagreements with our particular views, but as violations of the primary necessity for victory. Persons and groups who thought only in terms of "peace," and refused to see the global war taking shape, didn't like the Communists' "warlike" approach to such questions, and thought there should be "freedom" for everyone to act and speak as he pleased. The false part of this half-truth, however, is that brought forward by Dr. Meiklejohn, that the Communists demand liberties for themselves that they deny to others, or that we consider ourselves at war with our allies.

As a matter of clarity, I should assure Dr. Meiklejohn and all readers that the issue as we understand it is not one of bringing justice and fair play to the Communists. It is rather one of protecting American democracy from the dry rot that is at work and expressed in the exceptional laws against Communists, and in the public convention that Communists are outside the pale of collaboration. That is not fatal to the Communists; we can survive it and grow constantly stronger, but it does threaten to be fatal to the prospects of firm and orderly progress for our democratic life, it threatens to obstruct victory in the war, it threatens the prospects of a peaceful post-war world development.

IN OTHER words, we Communists have no interest in solving our relations with other groups on the basis of the Dale Carnegie technique (isn't he the man who wrote a book on "How to Make Friends and Influence People"?) We know it is not our table manners or the color of our eyes which raise enemies against us. We know that logic is the smallest factor in a situation, in which Dr. Meiklejohn, in all good faith, can repeat the accusation that the Communists are averse to settling conflicts by "peaceful political action" at the very moment the anti-Communists in the American Labor Party of Brooklyn seized control of that organization in flagrant violation of the primary elections—and justify their action by accusing their opponents of being "Communists." And this is the same group of leaders who, through their spokesman, Prof. George S. Counts, wrote a whole book to prove that the Communist Party should dissolve itself; thus it is revealed that such persons fight against anyone they disapprove of having any rights of political action at all, in any form, whether it be through their own party or through any other established political organization.

Communists look to the masses of the people as the main source of the cooperation they desire. As to the special circles who emphasize their anti-Communism, and who maintain the exceptional laws against us, we are concerned mainly with establishing beyond all doubt, before the masses, that the divisions caused by them are in no way the responsibility of the Communists.

We offer our cooperation to everyone who fights for victory in the war, for the postwar organization of the world to prevent a new war, and for the broadest and most effective democracy based primarily upon the working class.

Everyone who really wants to fight for these things knows or will learn from experience that he can find no better allies than the Communists. That is the only important thing, and we are not going to waste time talking about non-essentials any further.

Any and every concrete suggestion as to how we can facilitate the broadest cooperation toward the common democratic ends will be received and discussed by us in the most friendly and tolerant spirit. We are not going to discuss any further the state of the souls of our critics, nor try to convince them that we will become more perfectly genteel. We insist upon the primacy of the fighting virtues of loyalty, courage, and understanding. Those who put other virtues higher will never be comfortable in the company of Communists.

EARL BROWDER.

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AUSTRIAN BATTLEGROUND

The new Nazi measures to hold the bridge between Italy and Germany. How underground sabotage moves "according to plan." Secret oil field at Zistersdorf.

THERE was an old saying, "The Balkans begin at Vienna." And another saying runs as follows: "Austria is the bridge between Germany and Italy." With both the Balkans and Italy being transformed into Allied assault positions against Festung Europa, Austria becomes extremely important.

Writing in a recent issue of *Freies Deutschland* about the role of Austria in the coming final phases of the war, Bruno Frei, one of the foremost Austrian anti-Nazi journalists, stated rightly that "the strategic importance of Klagenfurt (the capital of Carinthia) in the plans of the Allied generals might equal the importance of Strasbourg, Cracow, or Prague."

The Nazis confirm this view. They are feverishly active in assuring "order and quiet" in Carinthia, southern Styria, Salzburg, and the Tyrol. Special tribunals and reinforced Elite Guard garrisons perform this task. Secretary of State Roland Freisler, president of the Supreme People's Court at Leipzig, went personally to Klagenfurt to sentence thirty-seven peasants, workers and small merchants for high treason. The Nazi press published only summaries of the trial, but even so it was learned that the defendants had "helped to spread disorder by joining or aiding small groups of army deserters, criminals and Communists who were reinforced by bands from southern Styria." These bands, cooperating with guerrilla formations from neighboring Slovenia, "terrorized the loyal population, killing several Germans and people loyal to the third Reich."

"In Lower Styria total chaos reigns," wrote Frau Huber from Spielfeld to her brother-in-law, Sergeant Major Heinrich Moser at the Eastern Front. "During Christmas they had to bury thirty-seven policemen. Yesterday again one was stabbed to death." And Corporal Bachleitner, one of the casualties at Stalingrad, received a letter from his cousin in Villach, Carinthia, telling him that "life is hell down here. One feels terrible. We never go out at night except in groups. Sometimes I'd prefer the battle front."

In the Tyrol things are not much better. Gauleiter Hofer told a Nazi rally at Innsbruck on the evening of July 31, 1943, that "the Alpine frontier of Greater Germany will be defended against everybody and everything, including treason." Salzburg, in former times one of the bastions of Nazism, is shaking with unrest and fear. The Nazi press in Austria is full of news about trials against subversive elements in the Salzburg region. During the first six months of 1943, the Nazi papers admitted the execution of fourteen people all from Salzburg for "underground propaganda, high treason, and sabotage." Many more were sentenced to long prison terms. Even functionaries of the Nazi party and members of the civil service were among those sentenced for disseminating "defeatist propaganda" and "vicious rumors."

WHEN the Nazis took over Austria in the spring of 1938 they immediately set out to destroy the country. The name "Austria" was banned from the press and from official documents. For a short time "Ostmark" was substituted, but soon even that was stopped. When it was necessary to choose a name for the whole of former Austria, the Nazis used the term "the Alp and Danube provinces—*Alpen und Donau Gaue*." The leaders of the former Austrian Nazi movement were sent to posts outside the country, and the gauleiters sent to Austria were chosen from the ranks of the German Nazi party. But despite all efforts to Germanize Austria, the opposition against the "Piefkes," as the Nazis are called, grows steadily. And the incorporation of Austria into the Reich has only strengthened the Austrians' desire for an independent Austrian culture, Austrian state, and Austrian freedom.

So strongly felt are these oppositional drives that the Nazis recently tried to exploit them for their own purposes. They began to foster old Austrian traditions. They even promised "autonomy after the war" (Baldur von Schirach in a speech in Vienna, July 1943). Hitler announced pompously that a crack division would be named *Hoch und Deutschmeister* after the famous Viennese regiment of the times of the Hapsburg monarchy. But these attempts to cajole the Austrians into a more submissive attitude failed absolutely.

Underground

THE Polish government-in-exile, which cooperated with Goebbels in the affair of the so-called Katyn forest murders, has done everything to discourage the Polish underground from fighting the Nazis. In official broadcasts government speakers have warned Poles to be careful and avoid unnecessary bloodshed. General Sosnowski has issued orders to Polish soldiers in Poland to refrain from guerilla warfare and sabotage.

But the Polish people hardly follow the advice of the gentlemen in London. For example, Polish railroad men are playing an honorable and vital part against the invaders. So serious is the damage they have caused to rolling stock that Nazi newspapers have been forced to note that a good deal of equipment stands idle because it is in need of repairs. What the railroad men have achieved is of utmost value to the Allies. Poland is a huge bridge between east and west and blocking transportation gives the Germans tremendously painful headaches.

The Germans have not been able to recruit railroad labor. Many desert even when they are forced into labor gangs. Fifty-five men and three women were executed in the first few months of this year because "considerable lengths of track including switches were destroyed by unknown hands." In Warsaw fifty others were hanged from gallows erected at the central station in order to "deter railroad saboteurs from their criminal deeds." The underground replied to the executions by destroying two German supply trains on the line Pabianice-Lodz.

In central Poland the Nazis cleared several areas as settlements for Germans from the Reich. A train with these colonists was derailed in March, 1943. Two other trains were wrecked. Several railroad bridges were damaged. In the spring of 1943, Nazi authorities executed for railroad sabotage twenty-nine persons at Ostrowiec, sixteen at Miechow, seventeen at Grojec, sixteen at Wiersbnik, and ten at Skieniewice.

In order to protect the east-west trunk lines vital to the German armies on the Eastern Front, the Nazis have been forced to assign to them, in addition to the regular railroad guards, new detachments of Elite troops with motorized machine guns and light artillery. It hasn't helped much.

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The press Bureau of the Ministry of Justice of the Reich published a statistical survey of the 116 Austrians sentenced to death between December 1942 and April 1943. Ninety-eight of them lived in industrial towns and the rest were villagers. Their occupations included that of worker, peasant, teacher, artist, soldier and housewife. Twenty-five were Communists, twenty Social Democrats. Others were Catholics or Liberals.

The publication of this list of people executed was one of the weapons in the Nazi campaign of intimidation particularly during the sudden increase in underground activities that took place after the appearance of the "Manifesto of the Austrian Freedom Front" in December 1942. But neither executions nor the speeches of Baldur von Schirach, Goebbels, and Frauenfeld, nor even the shipment to Austria of additional foodstuffs from the Balkans were able to improve the "very bad political atmosphere"—to use a phrase of gauleiter Rainer.

THE first to experience the hostility of the Austrians were those evacuated from the bombed regions of western Germany. More than 750,000 people from the Ruhr district were sent to Upper and Lower Austria. The appeal to Austrians to give up a room or two for the evacuees failed. The authorities had to requisition apartments. This billeting stirred up more hatred. "Many people here behave like real enemies, dealing in a horrible manner with our poor blood brothers from the bombed areas," complained Hitler's paper the *Voelkischer Beobachter*. "Everywhere the evacuees are snubbed or even treated like scum," writes the Nazi newspaper in Salzburg.

Functionaries from the Reich, Elite Guard members as well as soldiers experience the same hostility. "A party member must have the courage to be unpopular," writes the Nazi paper of Klagenfurt. And the Elite Guard detachments in Austria are steadily warned that they have to bear in mind the words of Alfred Rosenberg: "A storm trooper must have the courage to march through a dark tunnel without seeing the exit." Even more drastic are the words uttered by gauleiter Rainer at a Nazi party rally at Wiener Neustadt: "The loyalty to the fuehrer begins when you cease to know where he's leading you."

One of the reasons for the extraordinary efforts of Nazi leadership to assure discipline and obedience in Austria is the growing importance of Austrian industry for the Reich's war machine. Austria has become one of the most important armament centers. Its industry furnishes twenty-five percent of the materials necessary for the Nazi war effort. The production of iron ore, amounting to 3.5 million tons yearly in pre-war times, has been considerably increased. Today 7.5 million tons are pouring into the Nazi armament factories. The whole area between Linz, Vienna, Steyr, Wells and Ens is one big armament plant—a sort of super Ruhr district. The Hermann Goering works at Linz, founded after 1938, are working full blast. Sixty thousand workers were herded together from all parts of the Reich to work there. The Sankt Poeltener Glanzstoffwerke, a chemical and nylon plant, has trebled its output since 1941.

It is also worth remembering that until 1938 there were no Austrian mills with more than 7,000 workers. Ten thousand people were forced to evacuate towns and villages in Upper Austria in order to make room for new armament works. The railroad station at Linz had 144 workers in 1938; today there are 1,260.

Power stations from Vorarlberg furnish electric power for the Reich up to the Ruhr valley. Soft coal and magnesite production in Austria are of vital importance for the Reich. Austria is today the seat of evacuated factories of the Junkers works at Dessau, Krupp at Essen, I. G. Farben at Mannheim.

Conservative Swiss estimates have it that Austrian factories are producing forty to sixty percent of the total production of tractors and locomotives of the greater German Reich. More than twenty-five percent of the total production of cellulose products comes from Austria. Wiener Neustadt is the center of the production of Heinkel fighter planes for the Wehrmacht. Sixty thousand workers are employed in the factories of that city which was the target of one of the latest long range British air attacks.

Austria has also one of the most important sources of oil for Hitler's war machine. Little is known of the existence of an Austrian "Ploesti," but it exists. Only one hour by train from Vienna there is the town of Zistersdorf—for a long time considered a sleepy area whose sole attraction was its sour wine. In the early thirties a geologist, Dr. Buergl, found oil there. It was a small oil field, and the whole output was estimated to be 30,000 tons a year. But in 1938 the Nazis succeeded in getting 60,000 tons, and in 1942, the Austrian "Ploesti" produced 750,000 tons of raw oil. This is sixteen percent of the same line amount of oil needed by the German war machine.

It is, therefore, of utmost importance to learn that—according to the Nazi press of Vienna—numerous "persons linked with enemy activities" were arrested at Zistersdorf in the spring of 1943.

The Swedish paper *Goeteborgs Handels och Sjofaerts Tidning* reported on August 18, 1943 that the events in Italy had widespread repercussions in Austria. The correspondent of this paper noticed an increase in the number of underground leaflets, and the anti-Nazi rumor campaign reached unprecedented heights. Sabotage in the big industries is going on "according to plan." And the correspondent even quotes the Austrian Freedom Front telling workers in the armament industries: "Make an end to Hitler's war. The war is lost for the Nazis. Wreck the machines which make arms. Slow down the work. Do everything possible to prevent your factory from furnishing arms or munitions on time and in good shape. We want peace and independence. Austria for the Austrians!"

HANS STAUDINGER.

"Churchill Warns War May See 1945"—New York "Times" headline.

"But Mr. Churchill, what leaves and what autumn were you talking about?"

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EDUCATING THE COLLEGES

A recently drafted college student looks at the Liberal Arts of higher education and finds them neither liberal nor realistic. . . . The first article in a discussion.

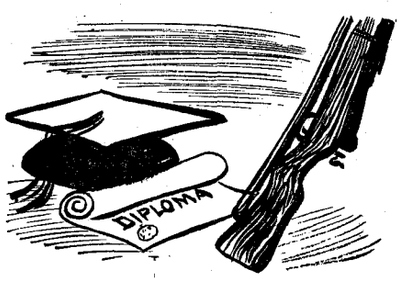
"I SEE that many tears are being shed now over the fate of the Liberal Arts colleges which have been badly hit by the lowering of the draft age," said my young friend, himself recently from college and now in uniform. "I gather that some colleges have already been forced to close their doors, and others are making frantic appeals to the government to save them. Many good people support the plea, for they are seriously concerned over the prospect of the country remaining without a Liberal Arts education. Well, I, as a recent college student, do not join in the general tear-shedding, and I believe that a good many other students share my attitude. For we have had our experience with the Liberal Arts colleges before and during the war, and it is our conviction that the closing of their doors is the best thing that could have happened to them, and that in the interest of Liberal Arts education and of American youth, they should stay closed until they can reopen as entirely different institutions from what they were."

My young friend spoke with a good deal of feeling. He is a young man in his late teens who has recently been drafted into the army from college. Several months ago he was a brilliant student in one of the better-known universities. He had a high record in his studies, was ambitious and serious about his education. Although he had been preparing for a scientific career, he went out of his way to take as many Liberal Arts courses as he possibly could for purely educational purposes. In former years a student of this type was much sought after by college deans and professors. That a young man of this kind should be so strongly opposed to his own Alma Mater and to Liberal Arts colleges in general was something to arouse the interest of a parent of two college boys. The interest was enhanced by the fact that the young critic was in uniform and spoke with the maturity which several months in the army usually brings out in bright young people.

"What brought you to this conclusion?" I asked. The question must have been on his mind before, for his answer came quickly, as if the query had released a dammed up flood of thoughts. What interested me as a parent was not so much the general indictment of the colleges, but the experience of a thoughtful and sensitive student who had found his Liberal Arts education inadequate as a preparation for the great experience which he, and thousands like him, had been called upon to face at a time of great national and personal crisis. It is only as such that I present here my friend's views, and as closely as possible in his own way and even in his own words.

I TAKE it [my friend began] that the object of a Liberal Arts education is to acquaint the student with the best that has been thought and felt by humanity. The Liberal Arts college has to broaden his outlook, teach him to see the world beyond his immediately narrow interests, develop his character and prepare him to find his way in the maze of problems which await him upon leaving school and going into the world. At least, this is what I expected of my school. The time was one of great confusion and of passionate differences of opinion which are the precursors of all great social crises. When I started college, the United States was not yet at war, but the great struggle between fascism and democracy for the control of the world had already broken out in Europe. We had already heard the rumbling of the great storm which was raging overseas. Even we, young students just out of high school, had felt dimly that the fierce struggle on the other side of the ocean concerned us vitally and that sooner or later, each of us would be profoundly affected by it. Instinctively, we turned to our professors and teachers for guidance in one of the greatest upheavals that had ever faced young people. We probably did not think so consciously at that time, and many of us do not think so even now, but subconsciously we looked to our colleges to prepare us mentally and spiritually for our part in the great crisis which was coming ever nearer to our shores. How did our colleges meet this tremendous need of ours?

Anyone who attended an American college of Liberal Arts just before the war knows how thoroughly and completely it had failed in this task. The war has caught napping a good many other American institutions, but none more fully than the Liberal Arts colleges, and none has made up less for the failure. As far as our Liberal Arts schools were concerned, we might have been living in a previous generation, not in a world which had been on the threshold of one of the greatest and most decisive wars in history. With a hurricane raging just outside our gates, the college campuses were as calm and indifferent to what was going on in the world as if they had been on a different planet. Ostensibly, the atmosphere in the colleges on the eve of America's entry into the war was one of opposition to our participation in the struggle. A survey of the college publications of that period would reveal the remarkable fact that up to the very last day of America's entry into the war, all the articles, editorials, and news stories in most of the college publications were full of the most blatant denunciations of the administration for "dragging the country into a war which is not our own," for "playing with the lives of the youth of the country" and with other similar, stereotyped phrases of extreme isolationism.



IT WILL be argued that a considerable section of the country outside the colleges was in a similar mood, and the colleges merely reflected the state of mind of the American people. But this is not so. The point I wish to make is that the colleges did *not* reflect the mood of the country; they lived in an atmosphere entirely of their own which had nothing whatsoever to do with the world outside. The American homes from which we came, even if they were isolationist, were not detached from the larger world and its problems. We had clearly heard the rumbling of the approaching storm and, if we hoped that we would be able to avoid it, we did not ignore it. The atmosphere in our homes was anything but that of indifference. Convictions were strong and opinions for and against were passionately held and advocated. There was a strong realization of the danger threatening our way of life. There was an overwhelming sympathy for the fighting democracies and a sincere desire to help them in the struggle, even if there was a reluctance to join the fight. If the period was one of indecision and vacillation, it was one also of great generosity and readiness to sacrifice for the cause of freedom and democracy. We were not participants in the war, but we were not strangers to it; we knew which side was ours and we did what we could to help it.

All this was lacking at college. The campus lived in the nineteenth century, or at best, in the period of disillusionment fol-

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lowing the first World War. The atmosphere was one of indifference to everything that was going on in the outside world, to all opinions and convictions alike. Even the isolationism of the college was not of the same type as prevailed in some quarters of the country. It was not based on any genuine conviction or feeling. It flowed from a spiritual hollowness and sterility which openly verged on cynicism. Only a few of the student publications which bellowed so vociferously against American participation in the war, tried to hide their opposition under the guise of some principle, such as pacifism, communism (before Russia's entry into the war), or sympathy with fascism. The majority did not disguise the fact that they were guided entirely by their own narrow, selfish interests, that they were averse to face the danger and the sacrifices which a war would bring with it. Democracy, freedom, civilization, the American way of life, all those vital questions which stirred deeply the life outside of the campus, seemed to be completely alien to the student body. Even ordinary patriotism was conspicuously lacking.

Yet, I would not say that the students as a body were entirely without ideals. In our homes, among our friends, we took sides, we held and expressed opinions, and participated in the heated discussions of the day. But somehow we did not consider that the college was the proper place to display an interest in such things. The college was a place to prepare for careers, to make social contacts, obtain diplomas and a certain amount of intellectual polish and manners necessary for a future social position. Knowledge for its own sake, development of character, understanding of the aim and purpose of life and of the vital social problems of the times, were no part of a college education. The Liberal Arts schools provided a professional training similar to that of engineering, or medicine, only on different lines. The atmosphere was intensely utilitarian, grossly materialistic, and brazenly commercial. The attitude towards the war was only a reflection of the larger, general attitude of the student body and of the faculty towards the world, its problems, and the place of the college in the scheme of life.

I KNOW that this sounds like a rather harsh and sweeping criticism. Let me give you a few facts of my personal experience which may give substance to my indictment, or at least explain why I and many others like me feel as we do about our colleges. These experiences are not only my own; their significance lies in the fact that they can be multiplied by the thousands.

I wanted to acquaint myself with the history of my country and enrolled in a course in American history. It was a popular course and attended by one of the largest classes at school. We were told by a clever, but bored instructor who had been repeating the same thing to other classes for years, that George Washington was a rich English squire who believed in slavery and fought in the Revolution for personal and class interests. Jefferson was a mushy sentimentalist who had been swept away by the high-sounding and meaningless phrases of the French Revolution about the inherent rights of man to life, freedom and the pursuit of happiness. Lincoln was a shyster lawyer whose only ambition was to become President of the United States. In fairness to my instructor I must say that he debunked similarly the heroes of other countries and periods. Debunking was in style and he clearly enjoyed it. He saw no heroism anywhere, no loyalty to principles, no spark of personal nobility. Self-interest, or class interest dominated human behavior throughout history. Everything that millions of people revered and held sacred was analyzed and traced to economic, political, or social forces. When I was through with the course, I knew a good many curious facts about the personal lives and motives of the fathers of our country, but everything in me had wilted.

The course in American history took away my desire to take courses in literature which I loved. Instinctively I must have feared that I would emerge as disillusioned in a beloved subject as I had become in a beloved country and people. Since I had learned early to read a good deal for myself, I shunned the college courses in literature. But I wanted a course in writing. The instructor in professional writing at our university was a popular teacher who was at the same time a versatile and successful writer himself. He had written and published a number of magazine articles and books. His lectures were always attended by crowds of eager young people who, for one reason or another, wanted to learn to write for publication. At the first lecture our instructor informed us that he considered writing that was not done for money, or in preparation for making money, silly and useless. He admitted that there were some people who wrote as a result of other motives, but he placed that sort of writing in a special category of its own which he called "precious writing," with which he was not going to have anything to do. It was an extinct, nineteenth century species of sentimentalism and he spoke of it with undisguised contempt.

This instructor divided English fiction into writing for "slicks" and writing for "pulps." He preferred the pulps, for although they paid less than the slicks, they presented a larger market which in the end was more profitable. In the field of non-fiction the problem was simpler still: a competent writer should be able to write an article on any subject, defend or denounce any thesis, write for or against any position, as the requirements of the job demanded. Writing was a job, or a craft, and every good writer should be able to write to order on any subject. The beliefs, convictions, and personal opinions of the writer did not form a part of his writing. As a good craftsman, he should learn to meet all requirements and supply every market. The trouble with the man was that he was so successful in his own writing that he was able to present himself as a living illustration of his teaching. He overawed the class with his prestige and competence, and almost bullied us into the acceptance of his views, although the more sensitive members of the class were outraged by his brazen cynicism and advocacy of the commercialization of human thought and of the written word.

OUR professor in sociology was a man of unique personality and national reputation. His pet theory was that wars were unavoidable, necessary, and even desirable because they helped to eliminate the surplus population of the world. An old Malthusian, he saw in over-population the cause of all social and even personal problems, the root of all evil. A man of extreme personal kindness, he nevertheless never tired of impressing upon us that social problems had to be treated without sentiment or moral consideration. Sociology was an exact science and its problems were to be dealt with scientifically, without allowing the human element to affect it in any way. He seemed almost to take pleasure in stressing the brutal aspect of the social conflict and the need to be "tough" and unfeeling in dealing with such problems as war, immigration, admission of refugees, child labor, family allowance, prison and other social reforms. He violently opposed every humanitarian measure which would tend to alleviate suffering because that would increase population, and this to him was the greatest misfortune that could be-

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fall humanity. Fortunately, his views were so extreme and so contrary to the spirit of the age, that he left most of us unmoved, but his great erudition, his unconventional, pleasing personality and his prestige as an authority on the subject certainly left a mark on many of us.

Our professor in philosophy was a man of great personal charm, refinement, and even of a certain type of religiosity. A pupil and follower of William James, he labored throughout the course to reconcile pragmatism with religion. But all that remained in my mind at the end of the course was that all spiritual, intellectual, and moral values of mankind were unstable; that justice, truth, freedom, and other ideals of humanity were relative. It followed, therefore, that everything that worked was right, and the standard of all things was success.

WHATEVER personal differences existed between our instructors, as a group they were uninspiring, without faith, without a unifying idea or philosophy that they could impart to their students, and without even a guiding aim for their education. The mood of our faculty was the mood of tired disillusionment, hollowness, and of the complete absence of any spiritual content. Underneath that thin veneer which could be interpreted as some kind of an intellectual attitude, there was a complete void, a negation of all strong belief in anything worth living or dying for. If I were to characterize the mood of our faculty, I would say that it was one of tired, spiritual boredom which seemed to yawn all over the campus and to ooze slowly from the faculty into the hearts of the students and left us wandering aimlessly without a strong interest in anything. I and a good many other students of my class often found ourselves envying the students of the engineering and scientific schools (although as good Artsmen, we despised them at heart not a little). These people knew what they were after; they had a clear purpose in their education and they saw how each course they were taking was bringing them nearer to their goal. We lacked all that; we had no general aim and saw no reason for our studies. We did not know why we were taking certain courses, except that they were "required," or that they gave us credits towards a degree. But why were these courses required? Of what good were the credits? And why the degree itself? This no one of us knew, nor presumably, did our professors, for they never took the trouble to tell us. The entire process of our education was lifeless and mechanical—a mere accumulation of dry facts and of unrelated information which was to be remembered only until after the examinations and then forgotten.

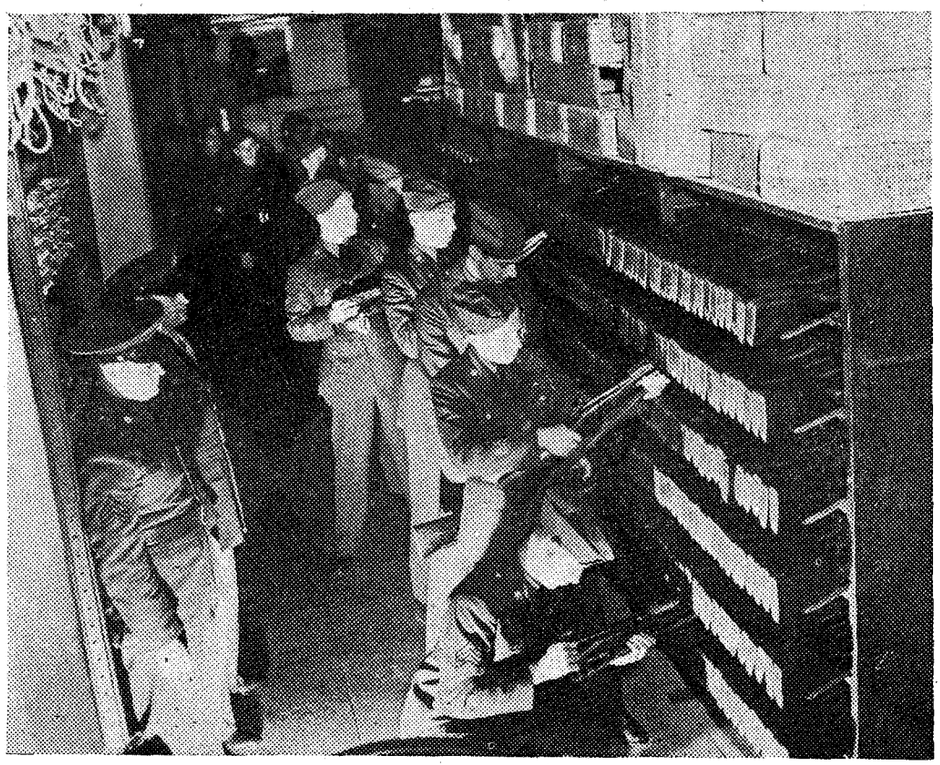
This feeling weighed unconsciously upon most of us. As a group we—the students of my time—were not unduly commercialized, cynical, or disillusioned. We were all born after the great American rush for success. Jobs, position, money, or even social climbing had not for most of us the lure they had for our fathers. Some of us had other aspirations and interests which had nothing to do with the amassing of money, or even power. Nor could we be expected to share the tired disenchantment of our teachers' generation, for none of us knew the first world war and its disillusionment. We were normal young men and women with the usual aspirations of youth and need of enthusiasm and devotion to something. We were born into a time of great crisis which we felt approaching, and for which we needed guidance and preparation. But our colleges had nothing to offer us except lifeless, useless information to be exchanged for just as lifeless and useless credits, degrees, and diplomas. And so, when the time came for us to play our part in the greatest emergency that has ever faced mankind, we were entirely unprepared, probably more so than the average youth who had not the benefit of a college education.

Do you see now why I, and a good many others like me, are not shedding any tears over the parlous condition of our Liberal Arts colleges? The fact is that the colleges have failed us, and at a most critical time in our personal lives. They also failed the nation. For the Liberal Arts colleges had a great task to perform in this war, a task far greater than that of the engineering and scientific schools, the task of preparing a great section of our youth to meet the present emergency with spiritual strength, dignity, and clear knowledge. Morale being the important weapon that it is in modern warfare, the Liberal Arts college should have been at the height of its usefulness as an arsenal of that great, invisible weapon of free men—knowledge of what we are fighting for, loyalty to our ideals, and devotion to the fundamentals of our civilization. But the college being what it was could not but fail in this its greatest task. It failed the students, it failed the nation, it failed society; and the students, the nation and society fail it now.

But the failure is not a result of the war. The war has revealed the crisis of the college of Liberal Arts, but it has not caused it. The trouble goes much deeper and further than the war. The decline of the colleges began long before the drafting of the students. Its deterioration had been in process probably since the first world war. Like any great crisis, the war only accentuated the disintegration and disclosed the state of decay which had long been eating like a cancer into the emaciated body of our liberal arts education. Perhaps the shock of the revelation will awaken the public and the colleges themselves to the realization of their greater failure, and they will reopen as better institutions than they were.

WILLIAM KERMAN

In our next issue we shall publish another point of view on the Liberal Arts colleges by Miss Marcella Sloane, executive secretary of the New York College Council of the Young Communist League. We would also like to hear the views of our readers on this issue.



Another side of the picture—at the drill hall built at City College of New York by the federal government, ROTC students learn proficiency in handling arms.

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IF THIS BE REASON...by RICHARD O. BOYER

EX LIBRIS

IN THE hope that they may somehow make a column, I have gathered together on the desk before me all the books I've read this summer. There they are now in three stacks beside and behind my typewriter, and as I look I'm conscious of a feeling of respect that has little to do with their content. They seem so permanent and I have a sense of their physical survival long after the dissolution of their writers; can see them dusty but intact in the stalls along Fourth Avenue in 1966. When Thomas Bell, who wrote this summer's *Till I Come Back To You,* is but a slab in a cemetery, his book, I am sure, will be hale and hearty near the curb of a second-hand book store, say at Fourth and Fourteenth.

As I continue looking at them I have a consciousness, too, of having put something over on someone. By God, I read them. I know what's in 'em. This feeling is hard to define. I like books. I like their smell, I like their feel, I like their print, I like their binding, I like their paper, I like their jackets. I'd like them even if I couldn't read them. Each time I read one I feel as though I'd gotten away with something, sneaked a pleasure that a lousy world would have denied me if it had known how.

It is a disorderly hodge-podge stacked before me and as I regard it between spurts of typing I am also conscious that I'm cheating a little. For example, there is the red and blue binding of Gibbon's *Decline and Fall of the Roman Empire* (Modern Library Giant, Volume 1) which I read at and in, but did not finish. The same thing goes for Prescott's *Conquest of Mexico.* But in each instance I have satisfied my curiosity, enjoyed myself sparingly, and gained forever the comfortable illusion that I've read them. This is a painless road to culture and on the same principle I could have increased my table's load with three fat red volumes of Boswell's Dr. Johnson and two or three silly novels by Scott. Then there are other absent books which evidently didn't have enough prestige for me when I made up the pile.

BUT to get on with my formal list. It includes *Western Star,* by Stephen Vincent Benet; *The Fall of Paris,* by Ilya Ehrenburg; a four-volume life of William Lloyd Garrison by his children; *Recollections of The Anti-Slavery Conflict,* by Samuel J. May; the six-volume biography (of which I have read four volumes) of Marlborough by Winston Churchill; *The White Face* by Carl Ruthven Offord; *Grand Crossing,* by Alexander Saxton; *Till I Come Back to You,* by Thomas Bell; *McSorley's Wonderful Saloon* by Joseph Mitchell; *Battle Hymn of China* by Agnes Smedley; *Mount Allegro* by Jerry Mangione; *New World A-Coming* by Roi Ottley; *Two Tactics, The Teachings of Karl Marx,* and *Left Wing Communism,* all three by Lenin; *John Brown, A Biography Fifty Years After* by Oswald Garrison Villard; *Smoke* by Turgenev; *The Stars for Sam,* by Reed; *Problems of Leninism* by Stalin and *Class Struggles in France* by Marx.

I enjoyed *Western Star,* in which Benet wrote of the unremembered and undefeated who lie buried "where the green grass grows from the broken heart." I thought *The Fall of Paris* an eloquent case history from which those who have eyes to see can gain lessons which will prevent the fall of Washington. The biographies of Garrison and Brown and the reminiscences of May show ordinary middle class Americans making revolutionary decisions which involve their lives. Churchill's Marlborough is a detailed picture of the first half of the eighteenth century during another world war. Mitchell's book was a kind of home work for me, for it consists of the best reporting extant, and I was trying to see how he did it. Miss Smedley's story of China's fight gives an excellent picture whose lines are sometimes a little blurred by her insistence on her own personality. *Mount Allegro* tells of Sicilians in America and it is a warm, honest story, while Roi Ottley addresses himself to America's most tragic and pressing problem, the plight of the Negro. As for the Marxist political writing, I submit that unless one understands the world about him, possesses some sense of direction, some glimpse of the why of war and of peace and some hint that victory for man and reason can still be won, both books and events may seem a meaningless jumble.

THIS is as true for a writer, of course, as it is for a reader, and it seems to me that the writers of the three books I liked best had this sense of direction. It seems that is the chief reason their books are meaningful, compelling and urgent. Political understanding, which is the broadest kind of comprehension and all-inclusive, has given them literary power. The most finely wrought writing will be out of focus and thereby suffer a diminution of communication if the frame in which the writing is placed is awry and out of plumb. The three books to which I am referring, books which I hope everyone will read, are Alexander Saxton's *Grand Crossing,* Thomas Bell's *Till I Come Back To You* and Carl Ruthven Offord's *The White Face.*

None of the three is polemical, none argues with the reader, all are held to the strictest tenets of craftsmanship, none artificially pushes ideas, all depend on concrete action and incident, yet all are consciously political, consciously anti-fascist, consciously out to win the war. The very fact that they place their characters in a fully drawn world gives those characters a reality totally beyond writers who stunt, pervert and delete reality by omitting the great fact of humanity fighting for its life.

Thomas Bell's story is merely a Sunday in the life of a factory worker who has just enlisted in the army. The story is crisp, matter of fact, and moving, but in the mundane motions of a Sunday afternoon the anatomy of fascism is exposed. Miley Brook's leave-taking of his girl becomes additionally poignant because of the sense of the world around them. Carl Offord's novel concerns the struggle of a Negro woman to save her husband from fascism in Harlem. Does this sound forced or artificial? Read it then and if you ever read a thriller that contains more of suspense I wish you'd let me know because I'd like to read it too. There is an intensity about the book that is painful, yet in the larger sense it is as factual as life insurance statistics and a damn sight more important.

But the book I liked best of all was *Grand Crossing.* It's merely the story of a young man at Harvard and Chicago University. Like both the other books it specifically attacks anti-Semitism, Red-baiting, and race baiting. The critics say now and again there's never been a fully drawn Communist, that in fiction they are always stock characters spouting slogans instead of speaking. I'll take the Negro, William Christmas, in *Grand Crossing.* I'll take Ben Baum, the Jewish student at the University of Chicago. And as far as writers go, I'll take Saxton. You can have Gibbon.

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THE CREATOR OF TRISTRAM SHANDY

A discussion by T. A. Jackson of Laurence Sterne, one of Britain's "big four" pioneer novelists, and the times in which he lived. A writer who reflected his country.

Recently a Laurence Sterne Exhibition was held in Moscow—at approximately the same time that the British Broadcasting Company was serializing Tolstoy's "War and Peace." The two events had a common significance: the eagerness of two peoples, allies in a world struggle, to know more of each other's culture. For as the name Tolstoy signifies, the world over, the great traditions of Russian literature, so is Laurence Sterne regarded as one of the most distinctively English of all British writers.—The Editors.

BY COMMON CONSENT, Richardson, Fielding, Smollett and Sterne constitute a Big Four. Between them they opened a new epoch in English literature, the era of prose fiction, of the novel. It is as one of a group of outstanding innovators that Sterne can best be understood; and the phenomenon of the group itself is best understood in turn when it is noted that their period of productivity was also the formative period in which developed the economic and technological movement which, when in full flood, became apparent to all as the Industrial Revolution.

That is to say: theirs was the period in which production by simple manufacture culminated, and began to pass over into the modern machine industry, the factory system, and the age of steam.

Do the Big Four show any prescience of this? They do not. Why should they? But they are acutely aware of something we can recognize (while they could not) as a concomitant phenomenon, the attainment of an era of apparent equilibrium and finality.

TO USE an analogy: as a great wave is about to break upon the shore, there is an instant in which the reared up mass of water hangs poised in seemingly stable equilibrium. For that instant it seems as if all impetus has been expended, all conflict has been resolved, and finality has been achieved. It is the illusion of an instant only, but for that instant the illusion is complete and compelling.

Just such an instant in the wave-progression of England's history is summed up and reflected, in the work of the Big Four, and by none of them more vividly than by Laurence Sterne.

It is a stable England they depict; one in which no surface froth and scurry prevents us from seeing and examining every detail at leisure. The wave is never so clear and translucent as in the instant before it breaks, and the England of *Tristram Shandy* and of *Tom Jones* stands out in similar clarity. We seem to be able to distinguish every tree and flower, every sheep and cow in the meadow, let alone every character and oddity in the village.

THAT is the secret, as well as the abiding charm of the little world of Shandy Hall and its vicinity. It is a little England in itself, compact and self contained: an England in which every character is distinct to the point of oddity, but with the *English* oddity of normality carried to excess.

Walter Shandy ("my father") is an oddity when in his armchair, with an apparatus of mock learning, he seeks to reduce everything conceivable to rule and system. Out of his armchair he is as shrewd and competent in practical affairs as one could wish. He is, like Mr. Pickwick, a merchant successfully retired. His wall fruits are a source of legitimate pride. Even his bull is as good a bull as ever, if it were only given a fair chance. Mrs. Shandy, his wife ("my mother") is an oddity, likewise, but only through excess of wifely normality; only through her placidly non-understanding willingness to assent to anything and everything her husband chooses to say. When it comes to doing she knows better than to listen to anything contrary to the dictates of her native common sense.

Uncle Toby is odd enough when he bestrides his hobby-horse, but even then he is only doing the normal thing more thoroughly than it is usual to do it. What is more normal than for a military officer, retired, to take a professional interest in the campaigns in which he can no longer play a part? Who can doubt that during his period of service he was as competent as a company commander as he was shrewd, honest, and kindly as a man? So it is with Corporal Trim, with the maids Susannah and Bridget in their respective kitchens, with Dr. Slop, Parson Yorick, and Widow Wadman over the way. Each is an oddity, but only through excess of normality. Thus the oddity of each is cancelled out by and cancels the oddity of all the rest, yielding the result of a normal functioning community in which the variety of each is a function of the practical normality and community of the whole.

In short, Shandy Hall is England, and England only a larger Shandy Hall.

TO US this has it poignancy: for Shandy Hall, despite its self-perpetuating stability, was doomed soon to pass away.

Smollett was the last of the Big Four to die; and when he died, in 1771, the preliminary rumblings of the American Declaration of Independence could already be detected. Three years earlier Sterne had made his last "sentimental" journey in France, without detecting anything to indicate that the titanic upheaval of revolution lay only a score of years ahead. And Sterne was not the only one deceived by the surface appearance of assured calm.

At the opening of the era Swift, seeing not the slightest hope for the drastic alterations he yearned for, burst both his heart and his brain in an explosion of savage indignation. Voltaire, more philosophically, accepted the fact that stabilization had come —possibly to endure interminably—with a grimace, a shrug, and an ambiguous slogan: "We must cultivate our garden." *Tristram Shandy* which began in the year in which *Candide* appeared (1759), concludes, as *Candide* does, with a sting in its tail—only in Sterne's case it was more a fire-cracker than a sting:

"Lord!" said my mother, "what is all this story about?"

"A Cock and a Bull," said Yorick, "and one of the best of its kind I ever heard."

Because the period was one in which history seemed to have come to a halt, it was ideally the period in which all the pre-

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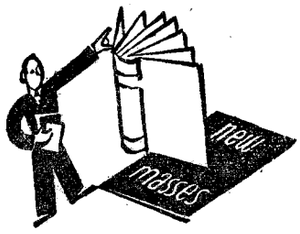

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vious development was summed up and brought to fruition. Returning to England from a trip to the Continent, Sterne notes with a new awareness that England is a land of medium-sized dwellings. There are no vast palaces, and no vast aggregations of squalid hovels either. No one is embarrassingly rich; few, if any, are distressingly poor. Virtually every man has a moderate competence: sufficient to justify keeping a hobby-horse in its stable, and ensuring leisure in which to ride it.

Since the clamor and urgency of events had died away, men were set free to see each other, astride their respective hobbies, and rejoice in the seeing. Or, as sturdy Will Hazlitt put it: "It was seen to be high time that the people, as well as being represented in Parliament, should also be represented in books."

THE process of which this was the consummation began with the great geographical discoveries on the eve of the sixteenth century.

At that date England still formed part of the organic totality of European polity: the system which had its twin peaks in the Empire and the Papacy. The discoveries themselves; the taking of Constantinople by the Turks which largely occasioned the discoveries; the Renaissance; the Reformation; the commercial and manufacturing developments which resulted from all these stimuli; all together resulted in a destruction of the old unity and the creation of an entirely new alignment.

By the time the impetus had been exhausted England had gone through "prolonged struggles, through a whole historic process, transforming circumstances and men." It had experienced three revolutions, the Reformation, the Revolution of 1640-49, the (Whig) Revolution of 1688—and a whole string of wars, civil and foreign. When, at last, the Englishman had time (and breath) to spare to notice and remark upon it, a new England faced an altered world in an entirely new relation.

England in 1500 was geographically separated from Europe, but in all other respects it was part of it. In 1720-60 such a view would have seemed preposterous.

To English eyes, in 1720-60, the Continent seemed a dreary expanse inhabited exclusively by incomprehensible "foreigners." Despite a much wider disparity of externals, the Englishman felt more at home with the inhabitants of the Indies, the Spice Islands, or Far Cathay—with whom he could conduct a mutually profitable trade, than with these Continentals nearer to hand. And since intercourse with the Continent was constantly being interrupted by perennial wars with the King of France and his allies, the Englishman accepted his isolation as a thing fore-doomed, and, in its way, a compliment to his self-reliant independence. Englishmen's minds turned inward to contemplate and find diversion in the infinite variety of the little world of England itself.

The preoccupation of the Big Four, and their great successors, Scott, Jane Austen, Dickens and Thackeray with "characters" —not to say *character* itself—is an aspect of the English national consciousness of difference and separation in general. It is something quite other than ignorant smugness and self-satisfaction. It is an historically-begotten product of the fact that time and again Englishmen have been forced, willy-nilly, to take into their own hands the solution of their own destinies. Time and again they have had to fight half the world —"one down, t'other come on"—and not a few of their own kings and governments into the bargain. It was that, or—decimation and enslavement.

Sterne was not only an Englishman of his period, even though he chanced to be born in Ireland ("are kittens pints of ale if they're born in a pub?")—he was by descent, by education, and domicile a Yorkshireman. And Yorkshire, then as now, was the most English county in England. It is also the county in which whimsicality and eccentricity is most highly relished, and most successfully combined with shrewd competence in practical affairs. It explains much in Sterne if we remember that the Yorkshireman, even more than the Englishman in general, can afford to be sentimental to extravagance, since his native horse sense guards him against being imposed upon.

That likewise gives the clue to the Yorkshireman's (and the Englishman's) distinctive conception of heroism as no more than homeliness and horse sense persisted in despite difficulty and discouragement.

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Uncle Toby is unquestionably a comic character; but he has the right to be comic, because he is not only one of the kindliest and quietest souls alive, but also a *hero*.

We might miss this aspect of Captain Shandy were it not that in moments of surprise or abstraction he invariably whistles *Lilliburlero*—the *Marseillaise* of the English Revolution of 1688. By this we are not only reminded that Captain Shandy played a manful part in that revolution, and the wars resulting. We are minded also that Englishmen in general, today, as in 1760, won the right to be *individuals* by their obstinate steadfastness through three revolutions and a whole historical succession of wars and vicissitudes.

WHEN the citizens of London, during the blitz period of 1940-41 made their way in their hundreds of thousands day after day, by enforced deviations of route and over unexpected obstacles, to reach their places of work—or the spots where those work places had been—at their customary hours, they may not have whistled *Lilliburlero*, but they were *heroic* in the true, Uncle Toby, English tradition.

And that brings us within sight of the solution we are seeking, the reason for the spontaneous discovery in England and in the Soviet Union of close affinities in their respective national literatures.

The same geographical discoveries which set in train the historical process which effected, temporarily, England's separation from Europe had a concomitant effect in Russia of the reverse order. As England forged ahead, economically, socially, and politically, Russia, as a result of the divergence of world trade from land routes to the sea, suffered a setback, followed by disintegration and retrogression, economic and political.

As England drew away from Europe in the west, Russia was as effectively left behind by Europe in the east. In each case a gap resulted, producing a sense of isolation; which, in turn, threw each nation back upon the cultivation of its own intellectual and moral resources.

The result was inevitable. When in the fullness of time the gap in each case developed its own negation, and Britain and the Soviet Union found themselves allies in the newest phase of the Liberation War of Humanity, each was ripe for recognizing the parallelism of their respective histories, and of the literatures in which those histories find expression. Looked at thus it is seen to be the most natural thing in the world that Moscow should discover, and rejoice in, so *English* an English writer as Laurence Sterne, while London discovers, with equal delight, so *Russian* a Russian writer as Tolstoy.

After all, just as there is a parallel between *Lilliburlero* and the *Marseillaise*, so there is between both and the *Internationale*. And certainly no two nations were

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ever better fitted by experience to understand and to appreciate the desirability of a state of things in which "the full and free development of each is a condition for the full and free development of all."

T. A. JACKSON.

Anti-Fascist Vignettes

A GARLAND OF STRAW, *by Sylvia Townsend Warner, Viking. $2.50.*

A BOOK like this can be a salutary shock to some young progressive writers. We have been fighting a long time for the right to mirror the whole real world in our work—fighting the blind slugs who whimper that Art has no concern with Politics. That battle is all but won today; it is practically impossible to find any mentally healthy writer who would seriously maintain that the enormous political struggle of our time is taboo to artists. Nearly all authors have realized that their words must be bullets. But overenthusiasm in the fight to admit politics has led some artists and critics to forget that you cannot make a novel out of political theory alone. A creative contribution is necessary—the understanding of politics and economics in terms of their effect on individual human lives. Nor, indeed, is a writer's political knowledge complete and accurate until he can grasp how it works on real men and women.

Forgetting this fact, some progressive writers fail to clothe the dry bones of political generalization with living and breathing flesh. Poems may try to be not only sonnets but Back-the-Attack editorials, plays may interrupt themselves to deliver lectures on economics. Human beings interest such writers less for themselves than for their symbolical value—a guerrilla leader will stand for the Spirit of The Embattled Farmers, a village schoolmaster will incarnate the Hesitant-but-Finally-Courageous Middle Class Intellectual. The result—to cite only one branch of literature—is a big black hole where there should be a vital American anti-fascist theater. And then we wonder unhappily why every word is a bullet that misses.

Along comes Sylvia Townsend Warner with a collection of brief, apparently slight short stories, and teaches us how to do our job. For in assuming that straight political analysis is the creative writer's best and only contribution to victory, many of us, writers and critics, have neglected our job. That analysis, by itself, is not enough for us to give. It must be made; and it can best be made in strictly expository forms of prose—the editorial on a specific subject, leading to specific action; the radio appeal, the journalist's report, the analytical essay; or such a masterpiece of its kind as Earl Browder's recent speech, which never once turned aside from its subject to introduce extraneous decoration or the irrelevance of a purely emotional appeal. But the great contribution of *creative* writing *is* its emotional appeal. You cannot write something that is both poem and editorial, because it will be no good as either. That is to say, you cannot make a good poem out of a specific political point that means something today and nothing tomorrow. What you *can* and *must* do is to build your poem on the underlying political, emotional, human truth which inspires the specific actions of yesterday, today, and tomorrow. Then you will have a chance of making a permanent emotional impression on your reader, as creative art must.

THE distinction between expository and creative writing is not just a piece of pedantry. The two do not mix, not because there are rules against it, but because the mixture simply does not ignite. It makes dull, preachy, and mechanical narrative, and it keeps readers away in droves. Hence only by showing political forces *acting upon real individuals* can the creative writer make his true contribution to victory. In poetry, we have lately seen Stephen Benet's unfinished but magnificent *Western Star* bring democracy to life—and not by speechifying about democracy, but by portraying, in beautiful and heartbreaking flashes, some of the men and women who made it and were forgotten. There is not a word about *this* war in *Western Star;* yet no one can read it without being strengthened for this war. And Sylvia Warner, with *A Garland of Straw,* shows that what can be done with the epic poem can be done with the perhaps less impressive form of the prose sketch.

True, these stories have been cut and trimmed to suit the slick-paper magazine's insistence on dainty miniatures. And that insistence has, in the last twenty years or so, seriously impoverished our short stories. Their characters have been reduced perforce to dolls undergoing delicate moods, their action has stressed the insignificant. The great tales of Kipling and Conrad might easily go begging for a market today—too long. Some of the stories in *A Garland of Straw* have suffered from this compulsory briefness and lightness, especially when Miss Warner tries to make points so subtle that they just aren't there. For instance, there is a trifle about a highly insane Trotskyite and Jane Austen, which neither a lifelong devotion to Jane Austen nor a shuddering acquaintance with various Trotskyites (I use Black Flag) has helped this reviewer to translate. But at her best, and an incisive, burning best it is, Miss Warner proves that two thousand words need not be inferior in human values to two hundred thousand.

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Here is "The Apprentice," a tale of a well-fed German child and a starving Polish child. Not a word about the economic basis of Nazism or its administrative methods, not a single generalization about the millions dead or the millions heroically resisting. Just one tiny corner of the conflict, big enough to hold two children. Yet few novels and no plays have told you as much about Nazism as this story, and all the newspaper reports of mass graves do not surpass in horror Miss Warner's picture of a child eating a cinnamon bun. For she has achieved the highest skill of the creative writer—to realize one human being so vividly that that one embodies all.

HERE is another corner with two very different children—"Noah's Ark," a small brother and sister and their pathetic ark of safety in the flood of the blitz. Here are the Purveys, who sold cigarettes when there were any—and here is the Nazi executioner dolling himself up for his high function. You meet a rather soft-headed, well-meaning boy, one of the Nazi soldiers sent to murder Spain, at the moment when it dawns upon him that something is rotten; and you meet a lonely, courageous refugee boy in England, hoping desperately that Chamberlain will not give in at Munich. In the sizzling, savage "Language of Flowers" you encounter perhaps the worst people of all—at first sight just a few mutton-headed English persons of title arranging fumblingly to plant flowers on an unimportant German grave. But somehow you come away knowing and hating Cliveden more thoroughly than ever before.

So there is plenty of political instruction in these stories. But it is not delivered as instruction. Instead it is the terse record of what has been happening to real people, here and there, these past ten years. And people do not grow obsolete overnight, as the editorial-poems, the oration-plays grow obsolete the minute the war news takes a new turn. There is no attempt in Miss Warner's book to give you scraps of information that will get you precariously from today to tomorrow and be forgotten the day after. Such information is indispensable in advertising, in political campaigning, in journalism and radio appeals, and those who convey it best are good artists in their own trade. But the story teller, if he has the skill of a Sylvia Warner, can make you wiser and more understanding for the rest of your life. For him the exigencies of the present need not blot out the realities of past and future, without which all discussion of the present is incomplete. Miss Warner's collection contains, for instance, "An Unimportant Case," the story of two unemployed people in the worst of the depression. An obsolete subject, perhaps, for the newspapers and the makers of headline fiction. Yet none the less that story is a weapon in this war.

JOY DAVIDMAN.

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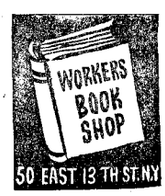

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LAD FROM OUR TOWN

A film about a Russian youth who believed that "first one should be a soldier and then anything else he pleases." . . . Reviewed by Daniel Prentiss.

No less than Americans, the Russians are a movie-going people. The story has it that back in the days of '41 the citizens of Moscow only fully realized the danger to their city when the picture houses were closed. Months later the shutters were taken down and you could breathe a little more easily. Perhaps the worst was over. All of which is not especially relevant to the matter at hand, namely, a review of *Lad From Our Town* (now playing at the Stanley Theater)—except for the fact that this was the film that reopened the Moscow circuit.

This reviewer has often wondered why he always comes away from a viewing of a Soviet film feeling so high, so warm about the world. Take *Lad From Our Town*, for example. It is a modest effort compared to the thousand-sworded clangors of *Alexander Nevsky* or *Peter the Great*. Yet I wouldn't forego seeing it for any reason this side of mortality. The explanation, I imagine, is basic to an understanding of all Soviet culture—that is, a profound love for, and an equally profound perception of, the dignity of man.

This special quality, dimension you might say, comes through *Lad From Our Town*. The film takes us back to a small Volga town. The year, 1932. Lukonin, hero of the tale, is dead set on a military career. Somehow, university life suits him ill. He is "perfectly willing to admit the genius of Dostoyevsky," but his true interests turn toward the Tank Institute at Omsk. Thoroughly convinced that "first one should be a soldier and then anything else he pleases," Lukonin, not without some difficulty, exacts a promise from his beloved Varya to wait for him, and sets out on his way. The film takes him through his graduation at the Institute, marriage with Varya, a year in Spain in '37 and into the present war, one of the thousands of Lukonins, "lads from our town," who are making Russia the last resting place of the invader.

Good humor, sensitive regard to human relationships—for instance, man and wife (the Russians are very good at that; recall the treatment of Chkalov and his wife in Kalatazov's *Wings of Victory*)—these are the major virtues of *Lad From Our Town*. Technically, it is not strong, to use a balletomane's phrase. But to this reviewer at least, that is a minor consideration.

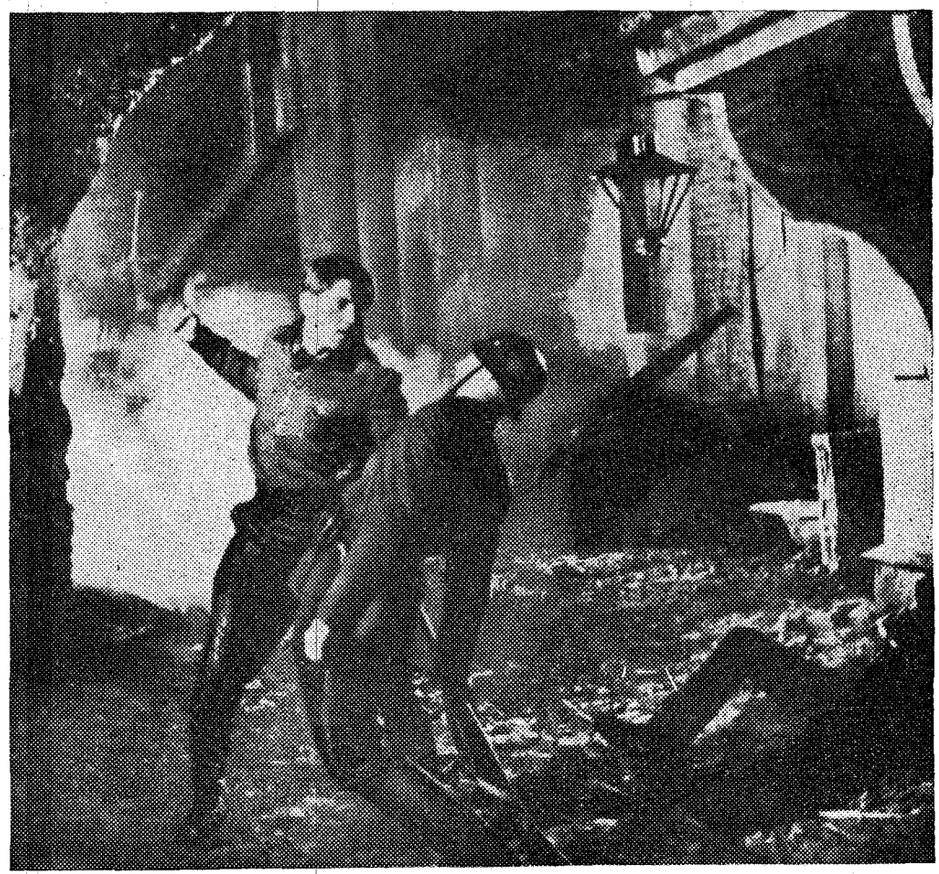
The film was produced in Alma Ata under the supervision of Frederick Ermler, director of at least two Soviet masterpieces, *Fragments of an Empire* and *The Great Citizen*. Direction is by Stolper and Ivanov. Story is credited to Constantine Simonov, known in this country for *The Russian People*, produced by the Theater Guild. Tellingly incorporated in *Lad From Our Town* is Simonov's by now famous poem, "Wait For Me." You will not want to miss it.

★

Another item going the rounds, this time a British short, *The Silent Village*, is very worth seeing. By now it should be no secret that the British documentary movement, as a movement, is the class of the field. This should not be taken to mean, of course, that certain single documentaries of other countries have not equalled and even surpassed British effort. But considered as a mass of work the British documentary comes first. *The Silent Village* is an additional proof of this fact, and serves to bring to the attention of American audiences a new director with remarkable talents, Humphrey Jennings.

The Silent Village is the story of Lidice re-enacted by the people of a Welsh mining community—a village named Cwmgiedd.

It's not easy to give you the quality of this film. The closest characterization, you might say, is that of a passion play like the Oberammergau. Mr. Jennings views the tragedy of Lidice in a strangly distant, devotional, and yet not unmoving way. For



In "Lad From Our Town" a Russian youth makes his getaway from Nazi captors—at the same time ridding the world of one of Hitler's followers.

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this reason, perhaps as much as for any other, the characters who play out their theme before us are two-dimensional in the fashion that stained-glass windows are two-dimensional. But this reviewer is of the strong opinion that the field of films is broad enough to include even this approach. And the unforgettable beauty of the Welsh voice lifted in song would alone demand your attendance.

★

"THE GREAT MR. HANDEL" (English film at the 55th St. Playhouse) makes the great mistake of trying to wed the vigor of the sturdy Saxon's music to an album of pretty-pretty Technicolor postcards with great shame to the latter and to almost everyone who engaged on this enterprise. Handel's music is a rock unassailable but, let me tell you, even he has trouble in keeping his head above the empurpled tide (and that goes for the film's diction too) that washes over him, five shows a day, seven days a week at the 55th St. Playhouse.

DANIEL PRENTISS.

★

THE Cagneys, William and James, have have made their debut as independent film producers with *Johnny Come Lately*, a trivial item that attempts to recall the horse-and-buggy atmosphere of small town America at the turn of the century. Cagney, drifting about the country with pockets full of literature and a heart full of romance, is rescued from a vagrancy charge by a newspaper owner—a helpless though courageous old lady who gives off clouds of lavender every time she moves. Said old lady is beset with as unsavory a gang of shakedown politicos as ever rifled a public till. Johnny-cum-Cagney brings the villain to heel, with the aid of keystone cops, wild buckboard rides, demure ladies of easy virtue who spend their time knitting, and the conscience of the villain, who treasures the good opinion of his son.

The film attempts to capture the charm of the period but reveals only a sticky sentimentalism that is completely empty both of the color and the historical veracity of the time. In attempting this role Cagney probably wanted a change from his tough guy past. Such a desire is certainly valid. But whatever his motives, let's hope he comes up, next time, with something more worthy of his talents.

J. F.

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MEETING THE PEOPLE

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NM's Editor, Joseph North, has been—and still is—doing just that: meeting you, the readers of this magazine, and many others who live far away from the editorial offices of New Masses. For the past several weeks he has been on a cross-country tour—from Cleveland, to Detroit, to San Francisco, to Los Angeles, to Indianapolis, to Chicago. He hasn't reached the last two cities yet, but will be there shortly: in Indianapolis on October 29; and in Chicago on October 30 and 31.

We hope that you who live in those cities have met NM's editor. It isn't often that we are able to send a representative of the magazine to meet our readers, to talk to them personally. We wish it were possible to do that more frequently. For we feel that it is owing to you, that personal acquaintance with the magazine. And we, the editors, want to know you better, even better than we do through our correspondence, and through the problems we've shared together as well as the "happy endings" we've effected together in working out those problems. It is very likely that a more intimate friendship would result in fewer of those problems and still happier endings. For no amount of cold type can do what a personal talk can toward answering your questions, getting your suggestions, discovering your feelings about this, your magazine.

But Editor North is not only on a speaking and "meeting" trip. He is also a reporter, one of America's best. And he will report to you, in the pages of New Masses, on America as he sees it during these weeks of travel. What are the people thinking, what are they doing, in these crucial months of 1943? The answers to such questions will be found in his interviews, observations, and descriptions, constituting a series of articles. You won't want to miss any of them—and you can be sure of getting them all by subscribing now.

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